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MY FIRST SEVEN YEARS

IN

AMERICA.

BY REV. GEORGE COLES,

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PREFACE.

As the question may possibly be asked, "What good reason can be assigned for a man's being his own biographer?" I will endeavor to answer it. In favor of the practice I have the example of Bunyan, Newton, Franklin, Adam Clarke, and others, and the good judgment of Mr. Wesley, who required several of his early preachers to draw up a brief account of their Christian experience, which he published in successive numbers of the Arminian Magazine.

There seems to be some propriety in a person's writing memoirs of himself, when it is considered that posthumous writers

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are always, more or less, ignorant of facts, and generally biased one way or other, by personal, family, political, or religious considerations.

Some objections may possibly lie against this mode of proceeding, even when it has been adopted from the purest motives. A man may be tempted to say more of himself than the nature of the case will justify. He may be in danger of speaking too highly of himself; for it is a well-known fact, that those persons who do speak often of themselves are apt to do it in terms of self-commendation, either directly, or indirectly; and this, in the estimation of many, savors too much of personal vanity.

Dr. Delany, in his life of the patriarch David, accuses him of "trumpeting forth his own fame," in those passages of the Psalms, where he gives glory to God for enabling him to accomplish great things; and yet the same author, as if smitten with an extraordinary degree of love for the

character of David, represents him as "a true patriot, a divine musician, a sublime poet, an inspired prophet; by birth a peasant, by merit a prince; in youth a hero, in manhood a monarch, in age a saint." This is more than "the son of Jesse" ever said of himself, and more than any modest man would say of himself, even if he knew it were true.

It is urged against writings of this kind, that they are wanting in interest, and that none but *great characters* ought to appear on the page of history, or be made the subject of permanent record. This thought seems to have been uppermost in the mind of Mr. Addison, when he wrote the 317th number of the Spectator, and, therefore, he very justly ridicules the idea of a "sober citizen" putting it on record, that "at eight o'clock on Monday morning he put on his clothes, and walked into the parlor, and at nine tied his knee-strings, and washed his hands." But with all due deference to the

amiable author of this plausible fiction, are not the "Extracts from the Diary of a Physician," albeit they are nothing but fictions, read by some of our fellow-citizens with more zest than the history of their own country?

As to *history*, so called, I think it may be said with safety of that part which is called *ancient*, except what is found in the Bible, there is great reason to believe that no small part of it is *fabulous;* and as to *modern* history, there is equal reason to fear, that much of it is disingenuous, distorted, and discolored. As to Church history, it is much to be feared that party spirit and violent sectarianism disfigure every page. I have now been a member of the Methodist Society and Episcopal Church more than forty years, but I never met with one historian, annalist, biographer, or reviewer in speaking of the Methodists, except those of our own Church, altogether impartial. And as to works of *fiction*, though they may

sometimes "point a moral, and adorn a tale," I have no time to read them; and if I had, and admired them ever so much, the constantly recurring thought "*they are not true*" would spoil the whole. When I read Moses, I believe him; but when I read Milton, though I admire, I cannot believe: and therefore I prefer truth, even when unadorned, to fiction with all its embellishments.

I would inquire also, Are not the lives of such men as Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon, mere histories of wars, murders, desolation, and misery? and is not the glory that surrounds such names *false glory?* And is it not a fact, that the domestic portraitures of Abraham and Sarah, of Jacob and Rachel, of Joseph, and of Ruth, are equally interesting, and far more profitable for youth to read, than the lives of the most renowned characters of ancient or modern times? For my own part, I am decidedly of opinion, that "the short and simple an-

nals of the poor," as recorded in Gray's Elegy, Goldsmith's Deserted Village, Richmond's Dairyman's Daughter, and Bloomfield's Farmer's Boy, are of more intrinsic value to the world, in a literary, as well as moral respect, than the more fascinating and less authentic productions of the far-famed author of "*Waverley.*"

G. COLES.

PEEKSKILL, N. Y.,
March 13, 1852.

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MY

FIRST SEVEN YEARS IN AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

TRAVELING ON LONG ISLAND.

DECEMBER 10, 1818.—About two o'clock, P. M., I left the city of New-York, for the purpose of spending a few weeks on Long Island, in the capacity of a traveling preacher. When I parted with my friends, James and Lydia Davidson, I felt the pang of separation to be almost as painful as that of parting with my relatives in the land of my birth. I had been intimately acquainted with them for five years past, and for the last three months had shared with them all the vicissitudes incident to leaving home, embarking in an uncertain enterprise, and landing in a new country. We had experi-

enced mutual sorrows, joys, hopes, fears, dangers, and deliverances, on the ocean, and while there had often occasion to comfort one another with the thought of seeing better days, "in the land flowing with milk and honey." But little did we then think what awaited us. My lot, from that time to the present, in many respects, has been very different from that of my friend Davidson. He was employed in the gardens of the great; I in the vineyard of the Lord. My employment has been the more honorable, his the more lucrative. Flowers of sweetest odor and fruits of choicest flavor bloomed and ripened under his care; but in trying to break up the fallow ground, and in planting and improving those corners of the vineyard on which it has been my lot to toil, I have, in many instances, labored in vain, and spent my strength for naught. His health was scarcely ever interrupted, until the fatal malady which terminated in death seized upon him; mine was always feeble, and yet I live. He is gone, and has left a widow and daughter to struggle with the ills of life; and I am still striving

"To land me safe on Zion's peaceful shore,
Where tempests howl and billows rise no more."

After crossing the East River, in the steam ferry-boat, I took my place in the stage at Brooklyn, for Jamaica, and arrived at the house of a friend, on whom I had been directed to call, just as the family were going to prayer-meeting. I went with them to the church, joined in the exercises of the evening, and then returned to my lodging. In the room where I slept, I met with a copy of "Rollin's Method of Studying the Belles Lettres," which pleased me so well, that I persuaded my host to part with it, and purchased it of him for my future reading. It is an excellent work, and was of great use to me in my subsequent studies. My host was a manufacturer of boots and shoes, and could make those very necessary and useful articles as well without the aid of polite literature as with it. But it was not so with me. I had to study words and figures of speech, how to instruct mankind in the duties of religion, and to convince and persuade sinners to be good: and such a work as

that of Rollin, if carefully studied, and the rules faithfully applied, could not fail of being very useful.

The next day I rode on horseback to Hempstead, and on my arrival called on the Rev. Phineas Rice, preacher in charge. He received me very cordially, entertained me kindly, and scrutinized me closely, but with that magnanimity which seems almost as natural to him as it is to breathe. The next day he mounted his horse, and accompanied me across the plains toward Jericho; not that there was any danger of my falling among thieves, but there was some probability, if I had gone alone, I might have missed my way. Then, after giving me proper directions, he left me, and I proceeded on my journey toward Cold Spring. When I had passed Jericho, I was overtaken by a friendly Quaker. We traveled together some miles, and conversed freely about the good things of religion. I had seen and heard Henry Hull, an American Friend, in England, and was glad to meet with one of his faith and order in his native land. Of course I inquired after him, but

the Friend on Long Island did not seem to know him. I have, since then, been at his house in Dutchess county, but was too late to see him. He had gone to the "better land." My new friend and I at length took different routes, and after exchanging the usual salutation, we parted in the same friendly spirit in which we met. About two o'clock I arrived at Cold Spring, and took dinner with a family named Titus. The same afternoon I proceeded to Huntingdon, and tarried all night with brother Platt, who, with his family, has since then removed to another part of the country.

The weather to-day was cold, but very pleasant. There was a little snow on the ground, the air was remarkably clear, and the sun shone intensely bright. It was so different, in this respect, from the smoky atmosphere, and the dark days of London, that I really felt as if Providence was more lavish of his bounties on this side of the Atlantic than on the other. And I have often noticed since, that, at certain times in the winter season, the air is extremely bracing, and the light intensely vivid, on

this western continent. Again and again have I been reminded of the words of Cowper, in his "Winter Walk at Noon," more applicable, I think, to this country than to some parts of England:—

> "The vault is blue
> Without a cloud; and white without a speck
> The dazzling splendor of the scene below."

My ride from Hempstead to Cold Spring, and thence to Huntingdon, was very agreeable—first over an extensive plain, then a short distance on a good turnpike road, then through pleasant groves of forest trees, where meditation

> "Might think down hours to moments—where the heart
> Might give a useful lesson to the head,
> And Learning wiser grow without his books."

As I traveled slowly along, I thought much of the joys of departed days, of the follies and felicities of childhood, of the vanity and vicissitudes of life, and of the probable pains and pleasures of the itinerant career. The public burying-ground at Huntingdon is a beautiful spot, and as the

traveler approaches it on the road from Cold Spring, the view is quite enchanting. It was so much so to brother Jesse Carley, an Englishman by birth, the first time he saw it,—having been appointed by the New-York Conference to travel on that circuit,—that he desired, if in the order of Divine Providence he should die in that part of the country, he might be buried there. He died that same year, and there, according to his desire, he was buried.

My friend, with whom I tarried all night at Huntingdon, the next morning accompanied me to Cow Harbor, where, at half-past ten o'clock, I preached from 2 Cor. v, 20: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." I judged it proper to commence my labors in the itinerant field with this text; first, because it contained such views of the character of the gospel ministry, as were agreeable to my mind; and, secondly, because, from the appearance of some of my hearers, I judged that they were unreconciled to God. The meeting-

house, at Cow Harbor, looked like anything but a church. It had no pulpit, no pews, no backs to the seats, no galleries, nor altar, no communion-table, nor lamp, nor candlestick to hold a light. It was a wooden building without ceiling, plaster, or paint of any kind. The "sacred desk"—how can I so miscall it?—was the homeliest thing of the kind I ever saw, being nothing more than a carpenter's bench, with a back and front to it, and left open at both ends;—and all this within fifty miles of New-York!

After sermon it was my duty, if I followed the custom of my predecessors, to meet the class. There were about *seventy* members present, and it took me nearly an hour to speak to them all, which made the service rather tedious; and in addition to all this, the weather was very cold, and the singing so poor that I was well-nigh discouraged in the outset. In justice to myself, I ought to have spoken only to a fifth part of the class, and given a word of general exhortation to the rest. But I was then ignorant of much that I afterward learned, and

hence fell into occasional mistakes. In the afternoon I preached at Huntingdon, in a warm room, and apparently to a warm-hearted people. There also I met the class, which was quite small compared with that at Cow Harbor. The members appeared to be lively, and that encouraged me much. In the evening I preached at Cold Spring, in a school-house, to an attentive congregation, and then went home with my good old friend Titus, and enjoyed a comfortable night's rest, after the toils of the day, which, to a new beginner, were pretty severe. In justice to the friends on the circuit, I ought to say, that they treated me kindly; and to their praise be it spoken, that since steamboats have visited their harbors, and a railroad has been made from one end of the Island to the other, three or four new churches have been erected in that part of the old Jamaica circuit where I spent my first Sabbath in the winter of 1818.

In the forenoon of the following day I visited several families in the neighborhood. One Presbyterian lady spoke very encouragingly of my labors the preceding even-

ing; and in the course of her remarks said, with a pleasant grace,—

"*Teaching* we *learn*, and *giving* we *retain*."

I had often heard the words before, but never with the like effect; and coming from the source they did, and with such an amiable spirit, they operated as a charm upon my mind and heart for several days,—yes, for many years; for whenever I thought of my first Sabbath on Long Island, and of the old meeting-house at Cow Harbor, and of the labors of the day, "the memory of that morn," when I first attempted to make pastoral visits, would steal over me, "like fragrance from a bank of violets." When I thought of the lady, I instantly thought of the words of the poet; and when I remembered the words of the poet, I could never forget the lady who uttered them.

In the course of the afternoon of that day I rode to another appointment, and in the evening preached to a very attentive congregation, from the words of Joshua, chap. xxiv, ver. 15. My host was a local preacher, a very clever, a very kind, and as people sometimes say, "a very smart man."

With the use of the word "*smart*," I had not then become as familiar as I have since, and of course it sounded to my ears very strange. But what interested me most was something that I had never seen before—a carriage without wheels, gliding smoothly, swiftly, and almost silently, along the road. It was the first specimen of sleigh-riding I ever saw, and to me seemed wonderfully pleasant; and I wondered again and again that some of my countrymen in England had never adopted it,—if for nothing else, at least for their own gratification.

Then again, there was another matter which I understood not. An itinerant shoemaker was manufacturing his wares at the house where I stayed. The farmer found the material, and the mechanic did the work at the house. In this procedure there seemed to be both comfort and economy. The shoemaker sat in a warm room by a window near the fire. No time was lost in going home to breakfast, dinner, and supper; for he took his meals where he did his work, and, of course, he was sure of that part of his pay. On the part of the farmer there

was also an advantage; for by buying a large quantity of materials, he could get them cheaper, and moreover he could see that there was no waste in the use of them, and by boarding the workman he had less money to pay out than if he went to the store and bought the shoes. In addition to these considerations, there was one more which ought not to be forgotten—namely, shoes made in this way generally last longer than those that are bought at the store.

In the afternoon I rode to Musquito Cove. This place is on the north side of the island; and after traveling awhile through pleasant groves I came in sight of the Sound, then of the Cove, and at last of the house where I was to preach in the evening. Some boys were at the wood-pile chopping wood. I was a stranger to them and they to me, and of course they did not know what to make of me nor I of them. However, as I did not alight from my horse, the old gentleman came out of the house and invited me in. The boys followed, the girls stared, and the good housewife wished to know if I was their preacher. The fashion of my

dress, the color of my overcoat, my narrow-brimmed hat, all made against me, and it was some time before I could satisfy them that I was the right sort of man. After a while supper was ready, and I was invited to "sit by." And here again, they knew not what to make of me. I ate no smoked beef, pickle, honey, head-cheese, dough-nut, cracker, cake, nor cheese, nor pie of any kind. The last two years that I spent in England I lived on very plain fare. I was one of the clerks in a dry-goods store. Trade was very dull, profits small, and rent and taxes very high; consequently the strictest economy was necessary with those who kept boarders, or the outlay would exceed the income, and bankruptcy must inevitably follow. We generally had four meals a-day, but they were very scanty; and it was on account of my having lived thus for two years, that I abstained from so many good things as are generally placed on the table at supper-time in the houses of our wealthy farmers in the United States. I actually thought it a sin to indulge in so much luxury. But those days are past, and I can now accommodate

myself to the customs of the country without any very serious misgivings. But the good lady of the house, at Musquito Cove, thought I was too particular, and with some warmth exclaimed, "I guess you are a full-blooded Englishman!" This I did not deny, and therefore let it pass. In the evening I preached from "One thing is needful." All present, as far as I could judge, heard with attention, and particularly the old lady, whose looks seemed to say, "I *guess* he 'll make out pretty well after all." The poet was right in saying, "All 's well that ends well."

On the 17th of December, in the afternoon, I preached at a private house, on the south side of the island, in the presence of Rev. Messrs. P. Rice and B. Griffen. The room was well filled, and the preachers sat behind me, which relieved me much. My text was Isa. lii, 7. There were no mountains in that part of the island, to which I could direct the attention of my audience, or to serve my purpose by way of illustration, but I had the messengers of peace near me, and the people could judge for

themselves of the truth or appositeness of my text, from their own feelings, in reference to the men of God who were in their presence. After sermon one of the preachers met the class, which consisted of about thirty whites, and five or six persons of color. The manner of meeting class was lively and profitable, and the members, one and all, seemed to feel well in their minds.

In the evening I preached at another house, about four miles distant, in a small room. My text was Matt. vi, 33. While I was discussing the first part, my hearers were remarkably quiet; but when I came to expatiate upon the fullness of the promise, one good old woman shouted so suddenly, and so loud, that it broke the thread of my discourse. However, as I was near the end I gathered up the fragments that remained, so that the loss was not great.

While I was engaged at this place brother Griffen was preaching a kind of dedication sermon at another. It had long been a custom among opulent farmers in these parts, when a new house was finished, and

ready for occupation, for the owners to invite their friends and neighbors to rejoice with them. The irreligious generally had music and dancing. The pious part of the community, sensible of the goodness of God in giving them houses to dwell in, frequently would have religious exercises on such occasions. So in conformity with established custom, brother Griffen preached them a sermon from the gospel salutation, "Peace be to this house."

December 18.—The preachers accompanied me to my evening's appointment. It was their design, as I afterward learned, to hear me, with a view of being able to judge of my abilities as a preacher, and to report their opinion in the case to the presiding elder. Now the presiding elder was a very excellent preacher, and he wished to have none under his jurisdiction but such as promised fair to be something. He was an eloquent speaker, and his personal appearance, especially in the pulpit, was unusually dignified and commanding. He understood ecclesiastical discipline, and Methodist economy thoroughly, and knew as well as most men

in his office how to bring modest young men forward, and to keep forward young men back in the work of the ministry. So he sent me, by way of trial, to Long Island, to labor for a short space, and to be examined, inspected, and instructed, by the preachers before-mentioned. And it so happened that they were of the right stamp to do this kind of work; but they were as magnanimous as they were wise. I did not, at the time, know their design; so I was under no temptation to make an effort to be something, when indeed I was nothing better than "a bruised reed,"—"a shadow rather than a substance." So I passed on with the greatest simplicity, suspected nothing, believed all things, hoped all things, endured all things; and, through mercy, escaped unhurt.

December 19.—This forenoon, while I was "mending my nets," or in other words, studying sermons for the Sabbath, my worthy friends, the preachers, were "fixing" things in the stable for the comfort of their horses. They were both noble-spirited men, and scorned the idea of sitting idle, and smoking their pipes, while their horses

stood shivering with cold in an old dilapidated stable. So they fell to work with their own hands, and like the true successors of St. Paul, wrought manfully till the work was done. The next day I preached at Rockaway in the morning, dined with Mordecai Smith, a local preacher of good repute, preached at a place called Sodom in the afternoon, and at Hempstead in the evening. On Monday, at eleven o'clock, I preached at South Rayner a funeral sermon, from Job xiv, 14: "If a man die, shall he live again?" The congregation was very large, and a considerable number of the followers of Elias Hicks being present, I thought it might be profitable to discourse a little on the certainty of the resurrection of the dead. I endeavored to prove that it was the *body*, and not the soul, that died, and that the *body* would live again, though worms should destroy it; otherwise the question in the text would be irrelevant. Some of my hearers looked as if they believed, others as if they doubted of these matters, and some as if they cared for none of these things.

In the afternoon of the same day, I accompanied one of the preachers to Rockaway, to hear the trial of an accused member of the Church. The accuser and the accused were brought face to face—a committee had been appointed to hear the testimony of the witnesses, and the preacher presided at the trial. It was a matter of misunderstanding between two members, hard feelings had been indulged, and hard speeches uttered from time to time. After a patient investigation of the matter, the parties were admonished, and brotherly love was, in a measure, restored. The preacher acted with great prudence and decision in the case, which course I very much admired. After these disagreeable matters were settled, the preacher conducted me to brother Higby's, where I tarried two or three days; during the time I wrote a sermon on Matt. xxiv, 13. I was led to meditate on this subject from the circumstances of the preceding trial. This family was remarkably kind. The father and mother were truly pious, the son very obliging, and the daughter very amiable.

Nor was it less kind in the preacher to take me to such a home He knew that I was a stranger, he felt for me as such, and he knew also that the family would make me comfortable. It was not without regret that I left this quiet abode. More than thirty years have passed away since I bade the family farewell, but I have not forgotten their kindness to this day.

On Christmas eve I preached at Carman Rushmore's, from the words of Moses, Deut. xviii, 15. At this place I met with father Losee, an old-fashioned Methodist preacher. He was confined to his bed with a broken leg, and I preached in the room where he lay. After sermon the old gentleman raised himself up in the bed, and gave a word of exhortation. He was exceedingly deaf, and perhaps could not hear himself, unless he raised his voice to the highest pitch, and as I had not raised mine much in preaching, he seemed, as I then thought, disposed to show me how it ought to be done. With a lion-like voice he declaimed against the vices and follies of mankind, and denounced "hell and damnation" against

all the workers of iniquity, in no very soothing terms. I had never heard an old-fashioned Methodist preacher exhort, and I really almost trembled under the sound of his voice. Had St. Paul spoken as loud when he addressed the people at Miletus, I am inclined to think that Eutychus would not have fallen into so deep a sleep as he did.

On Christmas day I had the pleasure of hearing the Rev. P. Rice deliver a masterly discourse on the Messiahship of Christ, from the words of Jacob, Gen. xlix, 10. In the afternoon I preached at Sodom, and in the evening at a private house by particular request. My host may have had a warm heart, for anything I know to the contrary; but he lived in an unfinished, and somewhat unfurnished house, and I never endured so cold a night's lodging before.

On Monday and Tuesday I passed through Jericho, Bethphage, and Babylon, and preached at each place in private houses to small companies. Riding four or five miles through a piece of pine woods, after a light fall of snow, which descended so softly that it covered the trees as well as the ground,

was very pleasant. Scarcely a zephyr stirred the air, a mantle of purest white covered the green branches of the pine, and the unfallen leaves of the oak and the underbrush. It seemed like the temple of nature, adorned by the hand of the Most High, and was peculiarly favorable to a devotional spirit.

On the thirty-first of December, as is the custom in most places where there are large societies of Methodists, we held a watch-night at Hempstead. On this occasion, from eight o'clock till twelve, the time was occupied in preaching, exhortation, singing, and prayer. The preacher in charge took for his text 1 Cor. xvi, 13: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong;" and I took for mine, Psa. cxvi, 12–14: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?" &c. The prayers were lively, the singing good, and the time, I trust, was not unprofitably spent.

On the first Sabbath in the New Year I preached at Hempstead Harbor in the forenoon, at Searingtown in the afternoon, and at a private house in the evening. At Hempstead Harbor I was very hospitably

entertained at the house of the Rev. David Buck, formerly a traveling preacher of great respectability. At the time I was on the Island he was located, and well settled in business. But though engaged in secular concerns during the week, he devoted his Sabbaths to the work of the Lord and the interests of the Church. His earthly career is now finished, but he has left a son to tread in his steps, who is now an efficient and active member of the New-York East Conference. It is thus that one generation of preachers passes away, and another rises up to take its place.

While going from my afternoon's to my evening's appointment, I very narrowly escaped a serious accident. The ground was frozen; a light fall of snow covered the earth, and hid from the view of the horse and his rider a spot covered with ice. I rode on horseback, and was pretty well mounted, all things considered; but my horse was smoothly shod, and in going down a gentle declivity her forefeet slipped, and spread out from under her, which brought her nose to the ground. I slipped

over her head and landed on my feet. Had her hind feet slipped instead of her fore-feet, I should have gone the other way, and fallen on my head. It is said in Scripture, that "A serpent by the way, and an adder in the path, biteth the horse's heels, so that his rider shall fall backward." Had I been traveling in Palestine instead of Long Island, it might have been so with me. But it was very different on this occasion, and I could not but say to myself, How often is it the case, that in the midst of dangers, seen and unseen, the Lord preserveth man and beast.

The next day I took my leave of brother Rice and of Long Island, after spending nearly four weeks, and visiting every appointment on what was then called Jamaica circuit. At that time there were only two circuits and two stations on the Island—namely, Jamaica and Suffolk circuits, and Sag Harbor and Brooklyn stations. The numbers in society were as follows: 1252 whites, 266 colored. The number of traveling preachers then employed on the Island was six, three of whom are since dead. Now there

are nine stations in Brooklyn, five in Williamsburg; and on the entire Island, including those two places, thirty-nine circuits and stations, and forty-two traveling preachers; and the numbers in society are 6530 members, 979 on probation, and 40 local preachers; 69 Sabbath schools, 6,000 scholars, and 15,000 volumes of Sunday-school books in the libraries. Such progress has that form of Christianity called Methodism made in thirty-three years. Does this look as if Protestantism were declining? Romanism may be on the increase in this country. Doubtless it is, but chiefly by immigration. Methodism also is on the increase, not by immigration, but by conversions; and it might increase much more, if every one who bears the name of Methodist were such as our fathers were "in all manner of conversation." Having traveled only one month on the Island, the friends probably did not think that I was entitled to any quarterage, at least they did not offer me any, neither did I ask for any. I had borrowed five dollars of a brother Englishman who had known me in Derby with that I

paid my traveling expenses, and left the Island free of debt.

On my return to New-York, I called on Mr. Francis Hall, the well-known publisher of the Commercial Advertiser and New-York Spectator. I had brought with me a letter of introduction to him from the Rev. William Black, of Halifax, Nova Scotia. On seeing this, Mr. Hall welcomed me to his house, and kindly entertained me during my stay in the city. I had not been long there, before I found a family with whom I had been well acquainted in England. They sailed from Liverpool about the time I sailed from London. The mother and I met in the same class in Derby; and I well remember the last meeting there, when it was determined by the family to embark for the United States. Many and fervent were the prayers that were then offered up for that member of the class who was then about to leave for a distant and far-off land. But ah! how little do we know of what lies before us! This mother in Israel, and her husband and ten children, embarked with prospects full as fair, perhaps, as those of

any family that ever left England. In a few days after they left Derby, one daughter sickened and died, and was buried on shore near Liverpool. Soon after this sad event, the family set sail for America, and when they had been at sea four weeks, the father died, and was buried in the ocean. On landing in New-York, the widow and her family, instead of going to *Illinois*, which was their design when they left England, took up their abode in the city, hired a house in Pearl-street, commenced business, and prospered, till the yellow fever broke out in that part of the city. After this additional calamity, the members of the family were separated—some went back to England, and some remained in the States.

Another instance of great affliction, in the case of an English family, came under my observation while I stayed in the city. This family, on their arrival in this country, had taken up their abode in one of the Southern States, but did not succeed in business. In their passage from Charleston to Richmond, the vessel was wrecked. One of

the daughters lost her husband and two children in the catastrophe, but was saved herself, by holding on to a rope until the sailors extricated her from her perilous situation. On their arrival in New-York, those of the family that had escaped the dangers of the sea commenced business; but soon after engaging in that enterprise, the health of one of the sons failed, another lost his reason, and the family were soon reduced to a state of suffering truly deplorable. The sight of a family in such deep distress affected me much; but all that I could do for them was to pray with and for them, and encourage them to "hold on" to the promises of God, till deliverance should come—perhaps it might come soon.

CHAPTER II.

TRAVELING IN CONNECTICUT.

When I had finished my probation on Long Island, I had to return my horse to its owner; but, in the order of Providence, I soon obtained another, with all necessary accoutrements to boot. One friend lent me a horse; another furnished me with a saddle and bridle, at a reasonable price; another gave me a pair of saddle-bags, venerable for age, and much to be respected for the service they had done. The presiding elder gave me a written certificate of my relation to the Church, which answered the purpose of a passport as I traveled from place to place. How different the lot of the tourist in America from that of the traveler on the continent of Europe! Here no passports are required, no searching of trunks necessary, as we pass from one State to another. An honest face and a silver dollar will always procure a comfortable night's lodging in these United States; and with

these credentials a man may travel any distance, and in any direction, and feel as safe as if he were in his own country and by his own fire-side.

The first night after I left New-York, I tarried at New-Rochelle, at the house of William G. Mead, Esq., who, on showing him my letter of introduction, recognized me as a member in good standing in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and an accredited local preacher. He was a Methodist, and as I carried with me the proper credentials that I was one too, that was enough. But he was a Christian also, and treated me as a brother in the Lord.

On my arrival at Rye, I met with a very cordial reception by the friends at father Halsted's. It was their prayer-meeting night, and they wished me to give them a short sermon. I had not forgotten the kindness of my friends in New-York, and therefore, as that subject was fresh on my mind, I was led to discourse a little upon the words of St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians: "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

With this kind family I tarried several days. In the evenings, accompanied by father and mother Halsted, I visited some of the neighbors, and at intervals by day the good old gentleman and his daughter Jane taught me how to sing camp-meeting hymns and tunes. The old homestead in which the brothers Elisha, Schureman, Samuel, and others of that numerous and respectable family had been brought up, stood where Underhill's house now stands, on a rising ground in full view of the Long Island Sound, the distant shore, and the sunny headlands of that part of Long Island, which stretches away in beautiful perspective, from Throg's Point to Lloyd's Neck. On Saturday afternoon, the weather being remarkably fine, I was greatly delighted in seeing about thirty sloops sailing up the Sound before a gentle breeze, the sun shining brightly at the time upon the whitened canvas of the little fleet, as each one of them pressed its way toward its destined port. So beautiful a sight I had never seen before. England's proud navy, and her ten thousand merchant ships,

may have spread their sails to every breeze that blows; and the parted waves of every sea may have given them a passage to every island and continent on the habitable globe; but after all that can be said of her immense wealth, and unmeasured greatness, she can exhibit nothing, that I know of, within the circle of her almost unbounded territories equal in *beauty* to fifty or a hundred sloops scudding through the waters of Long Island Sound, or Tappan Bay, before a stiff south breeze, in the time of peace and commercial prosperity.* There may

* Beautiful Sight in the Bay of New-York.—For the last week we have had almost incessant rains, with a strong north-east wind, and this weather has prevented hundreds of vessels from going to sea. The consequence has been, that a vast number have remained at anchor in the East and North Rivers, and moored at the wharves, with their sails furled, boats stowed, crews on board, and passengers waiting, ready to put off the first favorable chance. On Saturday afternoon the storm subsided, and the wind changed. Sunday morning was one of the most balmy and delightful that we have ever witnessed. Thousands of large and small "craft" that lined our wharves unfurled their sails, either to dry, or to spread their canvas to the light air which was to waft them to sea. All was bustle and activity. The pilots were all put

be something *sublime* in the sight of a royal fleet sailing down the English Channel, on a warlike expedition to the East Indies, or coming up through the Straits of Gibraltar

in requisition. The sailor-landlords were actively engaged in taking on board some loitering tar, who perhaps had a remaining dollar unspent.

At ten o'clock the tide turned from flood to ebb, when all that were ready cast off or hove up their anchors. Thousands lined the Battery and the shores of Staten and Long Islands, to witness the enlivening and enchanting scene. All was still on shore; no cartman's cart or heavy omnibus rattled along the pavement to disturb the scene. The voice of the sturdy pilot, the shrill notes of the boatman's whistle, and the song of the seaman's "ho-heave" as the sails were "sheeted home," or the "cable hove short," could be distinctly heard. In less than a quarter of an hour upward of one hundred sail of vessels were under full sail off the Battery. The first that led the fleet were several pilot-boats, working down to be in advance, and to take off pilots outside the Hook; then followed a splendid bark, gaily painted, bound to some distant port; then a fine ship, with all her sails set to catch the coming breeze. Besides her ordinary sails, she had her kites all out, lower top-sail, top-gallant, and royal-steering-sails all set, with sky-scrapers and moon-rakers. The long pendent two-striped ensign floated in beautiful majesty. Then followed the rakish-looking United States surveying brig, commanded by Captain Gedney, bound to the east on a

after a victory in the Mediterranean; but I speak of the *beautiful*, not of the *sublime*.

On Sunday forenoon and afternoon I preached at the old meeting-house in Rye,

surveying expedition. She had her boats hoisted on her quarters and amid-ships so numerous, as to give her the appearance of a whale-ship on a cruise. Captain Gedney has with him thirty lads, belonging to the Naval school, all dressed in the appropriate uniform of a sailor—red shirts, blue jackets, and pantaloons, with a tarpaulin hat. These lads are now with a skillful master, who is desirous that they may improve. They will have an opportunity of becoming well acquainted with the soundings and bearings on our coast, and may become excellent coast pilots. Following in the wake of these vessels were, during the morning, upward of two hundred others of all descriptions, drifting down with the tide, and favored with the light breeze from the westward, hardly sufficient to swell out their sails. All this vast fleet passed the Narrows, and got safe out to sea during the day.

No person at a distance, and but few even in our crowded and confined city, have any perfect idea of the beauty and magnificence of so captivating a sight. The bay spread out as one great sheet, so calm and placid as not to be unlike the surface of a mirror; the hills and shores, at this season, clothed in "living green;" the little islands spotted in the distance; and the fleet of vessels that sprinkled the whole bay, all presented a scene more like a moving panorama than a reality.

and then returned to spend the evening with the family, in company with a few other friends. But those friends, where are they now? The waters of the Sound, the sand-banks of Long Island, and the rocks of West Chester are still in their places. But where are the hands that cultivated those fields and fished in those waters? Ah! where are they? The puffing steamers and the rattling cars that now pass by show that great changes have taken place within thirty years. Both the preachers that were then stationed on the New-Rochelle circuit, and the fathers and mothers in Israel who used to entertain them, are gone to their eternal reward; but the goodness of

In the departure of two hundred vessels, it would be amusing to stretch the imagination and to contemplate the new scenes that await those who have taken their departure. It would be but a moderate estimate to calculate that each vessel had at least ten persons on board; the number, therefore, that left the city within a few hours, was over two thousand. What hopes and realities attend them! Most of them have left their friends, buoyant with the prospect of realizing a large share of the world's goods, and of human happiness—hopes and expectations that are not always realized in the voyage of life.—*N. Y. Express.*

the Lord remains, and his word changeth not.

Leaving Rye, where, on many accounts, I should have been glad to stay longer, I passed to Norwalk, and put up with brother Absalom Day. His venerable mother was then living, and with her I conversed about former times, when Asbury and Lee and other veterans of that age traveled through those regions. Brother Absalom Day followed the business of a potter. I looked into his workshop, and saw with interest what "power the potter hath over the clay, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor," as for example, of the same lump he would make two jugs—one for the purpose of holding milk, and the other rum. One thing more I observed: the potter made no vessel for the purpose of destroying it. This fact, I thought, might convince the most skeptical, if he wished to be convinced, that if capricious man never made a vessel for the purpose of breaking it to pieces, the just and holy God never created a single human soul for no other object than to show forth his power in destroying it.

At Redding I was kindly received by the Rev. Aaron Hunt, one of the pioneers of Methodism in Connecticut. I found him reclining on his couch with a lame leg, occasioned by his horse falling with him a few days before. His appointment by the New-York Conference, was Cortlandt circuit, which then extended from the lower part of South Salem to Pawlings, and from New-Fairfield, in Connecticut, to Peekskill, New-York. The presiding elder having heard of father Hunt's accident, sent me to supply his lack of service on the circuit. To this arrangement I readily consented: but before I entered on this new field of labor, I had an opportunity of attending a quarterly meeting on Redding circuit; and as it was the first I ever attended, I will describe it as faithfully as I can, and "nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice." The place where the quarterly meeting was held, was Weston. The presiding elder was Ebenezer Washburn. The preacher in charge was James M. Smith, brother of Eben, and his colleague was Theodosius Clark. Beside these the other preachers

present were Hawley Sandford, Samuel Bushnell, Cyrus Silliman, and Oliver Sykes. The exercises began at eleven o'clock on Saturday. The presiding elder preached the sermon, and the preacher in charge exhorted. After this a call was made to know how many persons wanted places of entertainment; that point being ascertained, another call was made to know who would entertain them. On this point there was no backwardness on the part of the people. One said, I can take *four*, another *six*, another *eight*, &c. The preacher then made the distribution accordingly. The members of the quarterly conference tarried for business, which was soon disposed of, as there were no complaints, no appeals, no licenses to be renewed, no applications for recommendation for deacon's or elder's orders, or for admission into the traveling connection, no reports to be acted upon, and not a great deal of money to be divided among the preachers. The presiding elder had lost his horse, and a handsome sum was made up by the members of the conference toward purchasing another.

In the evening there was a general prayer-meeting at the Church. I did not enjoy it much. There was, according to my judgment at that time, too much noise by far. To some, probably, it was a good meeting, but my ears had not become accustomed to such lively singing and loud praying. The next morning the love-feast commenced at nine o'clock, and closed at half-past ten. After the love-feast the sacrament of the Lord's supper was administered. One probationer was publicly admitted into full membership; one who had been expelled was read out; and the bans of marriage published for one happy pair. The presiding elder preached again on Sabbath, and brother Sykes administered a startling exhortation, during the delivery of which some cried and screamed aloud. This was something I did not understand; and because I felt nothing extraordinary myself, perhaps I misjudged respecting the feelings of others. I had never witnessed anything like such manifestations of feeling, either in London or elsewhere, and was therefore unprepared to judge whether the

excitement proceeded from the depths of penitential distress, or from an ecstasy of joy. The sermons both days were sound, orthodox, and powerful; but the exhortations seemed to be based upon a principle which I had not, as yet, considered to be the correct one—namely, that the greatest noise does the greatest good. I had partially adopted the maxim, that truth needs not the aid of sound or gesticulation to give it effect; the written word neither moves nor speaks, except through the medium of the eye. Nevertheless I must confess, that if this notion were to be adopted, the acknowledged power of eloquence and of music must be given up.

On my return from the quarterly meeting, I staid all night at the house of Aaron Sanford, sen., the oldest Methodist in Connecticut. An interesting account of his awakening, and that of three other young men, under the first sermon preached by Jesse Lee, in the town of Redding, is given by the late Elijah Woolsey, in his "Lights and Shadows of Itinerancy," pp. 138, 139. The venerable patriarch was still living when I

staid at his house. He has since that gone to his rest, leaving behind him one son and three or four grandsons in the ministry, and a host of relatives in the Methodist Connection.

The next evening I preached at Lone Town School-house, near brother John Hill's, and staid all night at his house. He married a daughter of Aaron Sanford, and has two sons traveling preachers. He told me that he owed all his prosperity, temporal and spiritual,—which was not small, for he was rich in worldly goods, and equally so in good works,—under God, to Methodism: that before his conversion he ran through a considerable fortune by gambling and gay living; but when he had experienced religion he began to be industrious and saving, and was very successful in business, and in a short time realized an ample fortune.

On Tuesday evening I preached at the church in Redding. Four ministers were present, two Methodist and two Presbyterian. Such hearers generally embarrass me more or less. The next day uncle William Sanford would have me call with him on one of the Presbyterian ministers. We

made the call, and were received courteously. The minister entered into conversation with us very freely about many things. His opinion about Dr. Adam Clarke was, that he was a man of great learning, but a fanciful writer, and that he had fallen into an error in the matter of the serpent that beguiled our mother Eve. He quoted St. Paul's words, 2 Cor. xi, 3, both in English and Greek, to show that the apostle was of a different opinion, as far as he could judge, from Dr. Clarke.

After bidding the friends in Redding farewell for this time, I rode to Ridgefield, and in the evening preached at the house of brother Mix Gilbert. This was before there was any Methodist church in Ridgefield; and such a house as brother Gilbert then occupied was a very comfortable place for week-day evening meetings. The rooms were large, and at that time were warm, well lighted, and well filled with attentive hearers. This being the case, I felt much more liberty and comfort in speaking than I did the evening before. After meeting, an elderly lady, who had never seen Mr.

Wesley, but had probably often looked at his picture, told me I was just like him. Praise, if well-founded, and well-directed, sometimes "elevates the creature;" but in this case, coming from a weak sister, and having in it nothing to encourage mental effort, neither lifted me up nor cast me down. Finding that I was invulnerable to the soft insinuations of praise, though I might not have been to the shafts of ridicule, this good woman tried to start me on a courting expedition, and even offered to write me a letter of introduction to a certain lady; but I declined the proffered kindness, and so the matter ended.

CHAPTER III.

CORTLANDT CIRCUIT.

My next appointment was at North Salem, on Cortlandt circuit. There had been a revival of religion in the place. This was some years before the church in which our people now worship was built. Our place of meeting was the district school-house, as is generally the case where the congregations are small, and the people are not able to build a church. *Now* our people have a very good one there, and a comfortable parsonage in which the preacher-in-charge resides. At that time the regular preaching-place on Sabbath morning, was at the widow Rundell's; but on this occasion we met at the school-house. My text was Eph. ii, 20–22; and in my sermon I endeavored to describe the spiritual building. When I had done, a Baptist brother asked permission to add a few words by way of exhortation. Our Baptist brethren generally, either in public or in private, give the people

to understand that all worthy candidates for Church membership, ought to go *under the water*, in order to get into the spiritual building; but on this occasion our exhorter said nothing about *immersion*, but tried to persuade sinners to give their hearts to God. In this I think he was right, for the revival was among the Methodists, and it seems to be disingenuous for any person of another order to trouble young converts with questions that the wisest and best men of every age, for the last fifteen centuries, have not been able to settle. Let every man, therefore, be fully persuaded in his own mind, and act accordingly.

On my way from North Salem to Carmel, I called on Hezekiah Sanford, a local preacher of many years' standing. In the early part of his religious experience the knotty points of doctrine contained in the Westminster Confession of faith troubled him exceedingly. But when he was almost ready to sink in the vortex of despair, Fletcher's Checks were put into his hand. This was in the beginning of harvest. He took a volume at a time with him into the

field, and at every convenient opportunity read them with the greatest avidity. Nothing could be more opportune or salutary, than these inimitable and unanswerable arguments, in support of the doctrines taught by Mr. Wesley. They were the means of banishing the unscriptural doubts of the anxious inquirer, and of healing his wounded spirit.

The weather that day, was to me distressingly cold. I had never encountered one of those fierce north-westers that seem to come from Hudson's Bay to Hudson's river, gathering strength as they pass over mountains of snow and fields of ice, till they meet the traveler with as much fury, apparently, as the army of Xerxes met the intrepid Spartan at the Straits of Thermopylæ. The weather in Palestine, one would suppose, cannot be as cold at any season of the year as it is throughout the winter in these northern regions of the United States; and yet we find David exclaiming, in the 147th Psalm, "Who can stand before his cold?" It may possibly be very cold at times in the neighborhood of Lebanon, but I question

if the psalmist ever met a breeze as cold and as stiff as that which met me and my poor horse in the winter of 1819, on my way from Salem to Carmel. These names are Scriptural, and why should not my notice of the weather be considered in keeping with that of the author of the Psalms? The cold was unquestionably severe, and neither I nor my horse could stand or move against it more than an hour or two at a time.

At brother Seeley's, where I preached in the evening and tarried all night, I met with a printed copy of the journal of the Rev. Seth Crowell. I had heard him preach, and met with him at the preachers' meeting in New-York, and thought him to be, as the Long Islanders say, "a very smart man." Of course I read his journal with no small degree of interest. In the early part of his ministry he traveled in Canada, where he met with so many discouragements and trials, that he was glad to leave the Province and return to the States. After this he was stationed in the city of New-York, where his labors were excessive, and his usefulness proportionably great. But his

zeal exceeded his prudence, and his physical strength soon failed; a nervous affection supervened, which made the latter years of his life a scene of trouble and affliction. In 1813 he was considered worn out, and his name was so returned on the minutes of Conference. In 1816 he began to labor again in the itinerant field, and continued three years in the work. In 1819 he was located; but was readmitted in 1824 as a superannuated preacher, and so continued till the year 1826, when he died.

I was then on my way to Peekskill, where I now reside. Thirty-three years have rolled away since that period. The river and the mountains, on which I often look with delight, are still here; but where are the faces on which I then gazed with so much interest? and the voices which I used to hear with so much pleasure, are they all silent in death? Nay, a few remain to be heard, and what is better still, they talk of Jesus and of heaven, as if they had long been familiar with those delightful themes. But most of the countenances that smiled on me, and the hands which ministered to

my wants, are covered with the clods of the valley, and the voices that often cheered me, are silent in the tomb. One of the families, under whose hospitable roof I frequently found a shelter, has removed from the place they once occupied. The name was Ferris. The father and mother, four sons and four daughters, were then living. Their residence was on a rising ground facing the south, a short distance from the turnpike-road, leading from Peekskill to Shrub Oaks. The parents and one son are gone to their long home. One daughter was married to a Mr. Lent, of West Somers. Their daughter Philena, afterward Mrs. Post, and lately deceased, was one of my wife's pupils when she kept a boarding-school in New-York. She boarded with us, and was one of the most amiable, most quiet, and most agreeable inmates of the family we ever had. Her loss, I understand, is exceedingly regretted by her surviving partner; and well it may, for she was of an excellent family, and as bright an ornament of the domestic circle as is to be seen in these our days.

Leaving Carmel, I rode past the big pond, now called Lake Mahopack, "a beautiful sheet of water, lying in the town of Carmel, Putnam county. It is about one mile in diameter. In it are imbosomed two or three small islands. The waters abound with various kinds of fish of fine flavor, which are taken in great quantities." At that time the lake was not a place of much note; but since the Harlem and Hudson River rail-roads have been in operation, the citizens of New-York find it to be, in summer time, a very pleasant retreat. Our preaching-place then was a private house near the lake. Now we have a church and a parsonage there, a flourishing society, and a good congregation. Between Carmel and Peekskill there lived at that time a number of families on whom I used to call, and at whose house I used to hold meeting in the afternoon, and sometimes in the evening. But the heads of most of them are gone to their long home, and the branches are scattered and settled in different parts of the country. A grandson of one of those householders (George W. Knapp) is now in the traveling connec-

tion, a member of the New-York Conference, and the granddaughters of another are members of our Church in Peekskill.

At Shrub Oaks meeting-house, on Sabbath morning, either from the coldness of the weather, or from some other cause, I enjoyed but little liberty in preaching; and on my way to Peekskill I felt so cast down in my mind, that I knew not what to do. At length I had recourse to an expedient, in the use of which I have often found relief. Mr. Bramwell used to say, "*Prayer* will always bring us right." I have often found *singing* to do the same. So did Luther; and it is recorded in the journal of an American gentleman who visited the public schools in Prussia, that at an orphan asylum, where there were many boys, and some of them inclined to be rude, on the appearance of an uproar among them, the superintendent always set them to singing; "for," said he, "it keeps the devil out of them." I had learned, either on Long Island, or at father Halsted's, in the town of Rye, a hymn called "The Family Bible," the third verse of which runs thus:—

"Ye scenes of tranquillity, long have we parted,
My hopes almost gone, and my parents no more;
In sorrow and sadness I live broken-hearted,
And wander unknown on a far-distant shore:
Yet how can I doubt my dear Saviour's protection,
Unmindful of gifts from his bountiful hand;
O let me with patience receive his correction,
And think of the Bible that lay on the stand."

For several days and nights I had been thinking much of home; and under the circumstances in which I was placed, the words of the hymn were remarkably soothing to my feelings. The weather was extremely cold, my clothing was not at all adapted to the rigors of winter in this blustering climate, and by the time I got to the top of Barmoor's-hill, the dreadful north-wester coming up from the river and the valley, almost took me off my horse. I felt as if I should like to return home. But I had no home to go to, and perhaps it was well I had not; for if only one soul is saved by my humble instrumentality, and I get safe to heaven at last, eternity will make amends for all. On reaching the turnpike-gate, I had a little conversation with the keeper. He is still living, and told me a few days

since, that when I gave him to understand I had taken father Hunt's place, and was coming to Peekskill to preach, he thought I should not do much in that important business. Poor man! he afterward tried to do something in that line himself; but failing to accomplish anything to the satisfaction of the Church of which he was then a member, he left it, and joined another, and is now tottering on the brink of eternity, with but little to comfort him in this life, and I fear with but slender hopes of a better; and yet he feels confident that he shall "overcome at the last."

At Peekskill I found that things wore a much brighter aspect than I had anticipated. The society, though not very large, for the village itself was then but a small settlement, was in a lively and prosperous condition. It is much to be regretted, that in most places, with which I am acquainted, no records have been kept of the early history of our societies, showing who were the preachers that first visited the place, what reception they met with, when and by whom the first class was formed, who were

the members, and what was their station in life. Our discipline requires that we should keep a list of the members as they live in streets, in thickly-settled places, villages, and cities; but when and where was this ever done? except, perhaps, in New-York, and a few other places. It is an easy matter to put the name of a person on the class paper or class book, and it is not unfrequently the case in some places, that this is the only record to be found of the members of the Church. In consequence of this loose way of keeping our Church registers, it has long been the case, I fear, that Church relationship and covenant engagements are very lightly regarded. It is not so in other Churches, and I think we might learn of them a useful lesson in this particular.

In the Peekskill Church record, I found the name of Thomas Clark, a member of James Taylor's class. It is also noted in the record, that he joined the Church in 1839. But report says, that he did a great deal toward building the *first* church; and if this be correct, he must have been the Thomas

Clark mentioned in Bolton's History of West Chester county, as one of the "managers" of the Methodist society in Peekskill. The said Thomas Clark died last summer, aged 80 years. His leader says, that he was out of society many years, and that he joined again in 1839. In the same record I found the name of Catherine Osborn, and over against her name written "admitted in 1790, died September 8, 1846, in the 98th year of her age." "Phebe Ward, admitted in 1791, died January 9, 1848, aged about 92 years." "Catherine Start, admitted in 1791, died September 14, 1848."

The minutes of conference give no account of Peekskill, as a separate station, till within a few years past, and as the records of the quarterly conference of the circuit were not kept here, and as the old class papers have long since disappeared, and no other Church record has been preserved, I can only conjecture that this place was included within the bounds of the New-Rochelle circuit. Thirty-three years ago, to my certain knowledge, it made a part of Cortlandt circuit, and the preaching places

were as follows: Mount Zion, in the town of Somers; John Brady's, in South Salem; the widow Rundell's, North Salem, and Major Cliff's; Pawlings, and Paterson; New-Fairfield, Carmel, Shrub Oaks, and Peekskill, and several intermediate places. At that time the society in Peekskill seemed to be alive in religion. Father Start was one of the leading members in the society. Probably he was one of the first-fruits of Methodism in the place; and as is very often the case with such persons, he acquired an influence in the society, which he was very willing to use for the good of the cause. He was a very plain dealer, and if the preacher seemed to lack animation in his public exercises, he would try to give him a start while he was preaching, by saying, "Put on a little more fire, brother." The first Sabbath I preached here, I felt much cast down in mind, and did not raise my voice to that pitch, which, perhaps, I should otherwise have done. But being a stranger he did not, on that occasion, make as free with me as he did afterward, when he gave me to understand, that the proper key for

Peekskill was, at least, half an octave higher, and full twice as loud. Tommy Hammond, as he was generally called, was a member of the society at that time. He was a great shouter, but his utterances were sometimes so very loud, and withal so very sudden, that the whole congregation would seem to be electrified. Of the utility of such shouting I have very serious doubts. I think there is a way of serving God more acceptably than either that of dead silence, or by these tremendous shouts; and yet I would not presume to say that either of them is offensive to God. Perhaps the reasoning of St. Paul on another subject will hold good in this case, as well as in that. On the subject of speaking in an unknown tongue, the apostle says, "Thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified." So the silent worshiper, and the loud shouter, may both be acceptable to their God, but the "unlearned is not edified." Of the sincere piety of brother Hammond I know not that doubts were ever entertained by any one who knew him. In his dress he was as plain as a Quaker. He

wore a plain drab coat without buttons, and a hat of the same color, with a broad brim He also thought it more commendable in a Methodist preacher to wear a broad-brimmed hat than a narrow one. This was the fashion at that time, and as my hat was too narrow in the brim, he being a hatter by trade, took the liberty to furnish me with one of broader dimensions. In Mr. Wesley's time "enormous bonnets" were condemned by the discipline; but in 1819 the brim of a man's hat which now would be considered "enormous," on account of its breadth, was regarded with the profoundest respect. In fact it seemed to me, that some of our people thought that a broad-brimmed hat made a minister look very religious.

About a year before I came to Peekskill the first time, a young preacher of classical education and "splendid talents" had drawn to the Methodist Church some of the first families in the place. He did not remain long in these parts, and the few that were his greatest admirers soon disappeared. There was, however, still left, a very re-

spectable congregation, and on the day that I first officiated here, two were added to the Church. The village, at that time, was small compared with what it is now. Then there were but four places of public worship, now there are ten. The Friends being divided into two parties, Orthodox and Hicksites, occupy two; the Methodists being divided into three branches, occupy three; the Presbyterians, divided into Old and New School, occupy two. The other denominations are the Protestant Episcopal, Dutch Reformed, and Baptist. Churches and congregations are sometimes like families,—to remain all together in one house, might engender strifes; to separate is to grow and thrive. One thing is certain, the *evangelical* sects are more harmonious in their feelings toward each other than they were formerly. The Dutch Reformed, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Episcopal Methodists, are now on a very friendly footing with each other, and so may they ever remain.

CHAPTER IV.

CORTLANDT CIRCUIT.—CONTINUED.

THE natural scenery in and about Peekskill is most beautiful, and the historical associations are rich in incident. The site on which the village is built is remarkably uneven; but if a few enterprising men of large capital could be persuaded to purchase lots and settle here, it might be made one of the handsomest villages between New-York and Troy. Let the waters of the upper springs be brought into the village; let a park and a fountain occupy the place where the Protestant and Wesleyan Methodist churches now stand; let a village cemetery be laid out on Academy Hill; let the streets be paved, and lighted with gas, and the deep ravine between South and Main streets be filled with founderies and factories, and Peekskill would soon vie with any settlement on the Hudson River. On my first visit I spent a number of days in and near the place, during which time I not

only attended to the regular appointments, but, at the request of the friends, filled some extra ones in different places. At one of these appointments I witnessed a remarkable display of the power of God, in the awakening of sinners. It was in Peekskill Hollow, not far from the present residence of Rev. Isaac Lent, who was present on that occasion. He had just received license to preach, has since then occupied a place in the itinerant ranks, and is now a wealthy farmer, but continues to preach as much as his time and circumstances will admit. He has two sons in the traveling connection, both members of the New-York Conference. A younger son, in the Sabbath school, last year, recited ten thousand verses of Scripture! Who can tell what will be the final result of all this? Brother Lent's farm is not far from Gallows Hill, a place famous in revolutionary history, as the place where a spy named Palmer was hung, by order of General Putnam. Part of the farm is in sight of what used to be called Continental Village, which was destroyed by the British in the time of the

Revolution. In one of the lots on this farm is a cellar, dug and stoned, which report says, was to be the residence of General Putnam. Whether the project was abandoned, or the house was built and then burnt, the present generation cannot tell. Near the western boundary of the farm stands an old barn, which was once the parsonage house belonging to the old Episcopal Church. A farm of perhaps 100 acres, constituted the glebe, which has now fallen into other hands. A short time since, I visited the old parsonage, in company with the Rev. E. Osborn. The barn was pretty well stocked with hay and grain. As we looked at the beams, floors, and windows, thoughts of other days and other things pressed upon the mind, and led to a conversation of a somewhat serious and solemn character. Who can tell how many godly sermons have been written, how many prayers have been offered, and hymns of praise sung, under that old roof, where

> "The moping owl doth to the moon complain,
> Of those who wandering near her secret bower
> Molest her present solitary reign."

Not far from the residence of brother Lent, and a little beyond Peekskill Hollow, once lived a family of the name of Adams, one of whom joined our Church at the time I first visited these parts. She afterward moved to the State of Ohio, and became a most devoted teacher in the Sabbath school; but while laboring in the good cause she caught a malignant fever, hastened to her friends in New-York, and died, as her brother informed me, in the triumphs of faith.

Before I came round to Peekskill again, after my first visit, I filled appointments at Somers, North and South Salem, Ridgefield, New-Fairfield, Pawlings, and Paterson. At the last-mentioned place I tarried all night at the house of his honor the judge. He was by birth a Scotchman, and at the breakfast-table the next morning, observing that I was rather diffident, he exclaimed, in the dialect of his native place, "Eat hearty, mon, and gie the hoose a good name." I had been at other places of note, and met with the most generous reception, and liberal entertainment, but nothing made so strong and lasting an impression on my mind and

feelings, as the words of the good venerable Scotchman.

I had not gone many times round the circuit, before the winter began to wear away. By the first of March it was time for me to return to New-York, which I did by the way of Redding, Norwalk, and Rye. I had traveled nearly 400 miles, and preached about fifty times, which to an experienced itinerant would have been easy work. But I was a stranger to everybody and to everything, and it is not to be wondered at if I made some mistakes. The weather was extremely variable. In December it was clear and cold, with just snow enough on the ground to hide the roughness of the road, and to make traveling pleasant. In the beginning of January it was uncomfortably warm, but before the end of February it was, as I thought, intensely cold. The friends, everywhere, bountifully supplied the wants of the inner man, but the outer man often suffered for want of a good supply of warm winter clothing.

While I was in New-York I spent an

afternoon and evening at Dr. Gregory's, in company with a few friends, among whom was Mrs. Caroline Matilda Thayer. She appeared to possess a highly-cultivated intellect, a mind well stored with various branches of knowledge, and enjoyed the enviable felicity of expressing her thoughts in an easy and affluent style of instructive conversation.

My next excursion was by water, from New-York to Sing Sing, and thence by land to Peekskill. On my way I called on the Rev. Eben Smith, whom I found to be one of the most companionable and interesting preachers of any I had become acquainted with, among all the members of the New-York Conference. He took me in his sleigh to two or three of his appointments. In going to one of them we passed the Croton camp-ground. He then told me of the good times that he had witnessed on that celebrated spot. At one of these appointments after preaching, he inquired into the state of the flock, and excluded two from the fold for intemperance. One Sabbath, after preaching at Croton, a friend brought me in

his wagon to Peekskill. Just at that time a colored man, named John B——, was strolling about through this part of the country, and getting a chance to preach wherever he could, either among the Baptists or Methodists. The brethren did not know him, and left it to me to say whether he or I should preach. As I had never heard a colored man preach, I gave way in favour of John. He said he was a poor, unlearned man, which I think was true. Though it was *evening* when he preached he gave out for his hymn,

> "Lord, in the *morning* thou shalt hear
> My voice ascending high."

For his text he took the latter part of Heb. iv, 13. He then talked all manner of good things that came into his mind, and after sermon called for a collection to enable him to "carry the gospel into other parts." The brethren paid him for what he had done, but did not invite him to come again.

The next Sabbath I heard the Rev. Aaron Hunt deliver a discourse on Rom. v, 20; after which he read the General Rules of

Society, and received one member on probation. When this service was over at the church, I accompanied the preacher to a house in South-street, to witness the first marriage that came under my observation. This also was new to me. But it is a thing so common in every age and place, that I need not describe it. Some ministers object to celebrate marriages on the Sabbath. But if marriage is a holy institution, why may it not be celebrated on the Sabbath? The sin, if a sin it be, consists not in the ceremony itself, but in the feasting that generally follows it.

On the third of April our quarterly meeting for the Cortlandt circuit was held at Somers, in the old Zion Church. Rev. S. Merwin, the presiding elder, was present, and preached on Saturday and Sunday. At the quarterly conference brother James Somerbell, a native of Scotland, obtained license to preach. Other local preachers, and some exhorters, had their licenses renewed. My own case was then brought forward, and my license renewed; after which I underwent a more thorough ex-

amination, and was recommended to the annual conference as a suitable person to be received into the traveling connection. At the love-feast next morning, about fifty-five persons testified that God had converted their souls, and that they were "bound for the kingdom." A few professed to enjoy the blessing of perfect love. But the most remarkable of this class was *James Horton*, a man well known in these parts. He actually jumped up and down, and shouted aloud for joy. He was once as zealous in the service of Satan as men of his stamp generally are, while destitute of the grace of God. He fought many a battle with mortal men like himself, and generally came off conqueror. At that time he had plenty of employment in that line of business, being well known as one of the greatest pugilists in Dutchess county. But when divine grace had changed his heart, his energies were turned another way. I do not suppose that he understood systematic divinity any better than he did grammar, and he often said he knew nothing of that. But in exhortation he was powerful; and

when he grew warm with the subject, he would describe the horrors of hell and the joys of heaven in strains of burning eloquence that would astonish the hearer. I have been with him at prayer-meetings, love-feasts, quarterly meetings, and camp-meetings, and always looked upon him as "a brand plucked out of the fire"—a notable instance of the saving power of divine grace! His friends thought that a memoir of his life and labors might be read with profit, and he was therefore prevailed upon to publish one in his life-time.

The next quarterly meeting that I attended was at Redding. We had service at the church on Friday, which, according to the Episcopal mode of calculating time, was Good Friday; and according to the laws of the State of Connecticut, the general fast-day; and according to Methodist Discipline it also happened to be the day appointed for fasting and prayer for Redding circuit. It fell to my lot to preach on Friday. Father Washburn preached in the evening, and again on Saturday and Sabbath. The Methodists in this case acted

up to the rule in three instances—that of the Church, that of the State, and that of their own Discipline. This was, I think, much better than the practice which now obtains in some places, where there are more quarterly conferences on the district than there are Sabbaths in the quarter. The old-fashioned quarterly meeting was a real religious festival, and very profitable. A quarterly-meeting conference now held on some evening in the week, is a mere business meeting, without sermon, love-feast, or sacrament. On that occasion we met on Friday, and did not finally separate until Sabbath afternoon. We had four sermons, a prayer-meeting, a love-feast, and the sacrament of the Lord's supper. The first sermon being on Good Friday, the subject chosen was the sufferings and death of Christ; and on Sabbath we closed the services by a solemn commemoration of that sad and glorious event.

In the course of two weeks from this meeting, I found myself again in the neighborhood of my venerable friend, who so gallantly said to me in broad Scotch, "Eat

hearty, man, and give the house a good name." But on this occasion I made my home, for a day and a night, at the house of father Candee. He had been in the traveling connection about twenty years, during which time his trials, labors, and successes were very considerable. He told me that at one time, when his family was in great distress for bread, a gentleman, who was not a Methodist, kindly sent him five dollars, and soon after that met with him. and gave him eleven dollars more; told him to do his duty, and assured him, if he did so, he should not suffer. "That gentleman," said father Candee, "had been employed in distributing the charities of the benevolent Mr. Thornton, in England, some years before." Of Mr. Thornton, I might add, some very interesting notices may be seen in "The Life and Times of Lady Huntington." The day after this conversation took place, I witnessed an instance of what might be regarded as an interposition of Divine Providence in favor of father Candee. He had borrowed two dollars a few days before, and was anxious to pay it by

the end of the week, but had not the means. But as we were riding along together, a young man met us, and engaged father C. to marry him the next day. The day arrived: the parties met, the marriage was solemnized, and the good minister got his reward.

Two days after this event, I rose at five o'clock, A. M., to behold an eclipse of the sun, and the same day in the afternoon preached at a private house to one man and seven women, not from Isaiah iv, 1, which I might have done with as much propriety as a preacher did in New-York a few Sabbaths before. His object was to discourse against following the fashions in dress: mine was to show the semblance between the solar orb and the Sun of righteousness; and I therefore took for my text, on this occasion, Psa. lxxxiv, 11: "The Lord God is a sun and shield," &c. Most people think that the word "*shield*," in this text, means a piece of armor; but may it not possibly mean something else, or be used metaphorically? The sun, when shining in his full strength, is so glorious a being, that

mortals cannot behold him with the naked eye. When looking at the sun in an eclipse, we generally take a piece of smoked glass to protect the eye from the burning rays of the orb of day. In that case the glass, thus prepared, acts as a shield to the eye; and may not this fact adumbrate that glorious truth, the incarnation of Christ? St. Paul says, when speaking of God, (1 Tim. vi, 16,) "Whom no man hath seen, nor can see;" and Christ says, (John i, 18,) "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

The next Sabbath after the eclipse, I preached again at Shrub Oaks, but with much better feeling than before; and after taking dinner with a friend, went on to Peekskill, where I attended meeting twice, and received two into society. In the course of the following week, as I was riding to my appointment in the Highlands, I met a gentleman's carriage. The coachman was a colored man, dressed in livery, somewhat in the English style. There were three ladies inside, who all looked healthy

and happy. So splendid an equipage I had not seen in a tour of six hundred miles, nor anything like it, except in the city of New-York. I asked the first man I met, whose carriage that was which I had just passed, and was answered, "General Van Cortlandt's." That was all I wanted to know. But the matter did not end here; for as I was thinking of the unequal distribution of earthly goods, I was greatly tempted to murmur at the dispensations of Providence; and before I was aware, the desire of riches had almost drawn me aside from the path of duty. I thought how comfortable one might be, if he had a few thousands at command: what a luxury it would be to take a morning's ride in a carriage like those ladies in fair weather, and in winter take a walk at noon, as Cowper describes it in his "Task;" or in an evening sit by the blazing fire in an elegant parlor, and cultivate an intimate acquaintance with the literati of every age. But while thus musing on the great advantages of wealth, another train of thought opened up in my mind; and at the close of day, when I had retired

to my room, I wrote it down, as follows: "While some are blest with houses and lands, and plenty of silver and gold, and a heart ready to distribute, others there are to whom this grace is given, that they should 'preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.' And who is the greatest philanthropist, the man who visits the abodes of wretchedness, and relieves the wants of the poor, who gives away a little shining dust, which at the best but makes the body comfortable for a time, or he who gives up houses, and lands, and relatives, and friends, and country, and spends his time, employs his talents, sacrifices his health, and perhaps his life, in opening to others the treasures of the gospel mine, and in persuading men to secure to themselves durable riches and honor? What the rich man gives is not, strictly speaking, his own, for men are but stewards at best; what the ambassador of Christ dispenses, he does in obedience to Him who hath said, 'Freely ye have received, freely give.' But while the one gives, he diminishes his stock; the other, while he imparts to others, increases

his own, as saith the Scripture, 'There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth.' While, then, the rich man makes to himself a few friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when he fails on earth, they may receive him into everlasting habitations, the successful preacher of the gospel may make to himself many friends, who shall be the first to welcome him to a mansion not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Happy shall I be if I can ever say, with feelings like those of the apostle, 'Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;' or, as he said on another occasion, 'I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.'"

The above reflections were written thirty-three years ago. I was not then settled in the ministry; nor was it certain, to me at least, that I ever should be: it is, therefore, not so much to be wondered at, that when traveling alone in a strange country, without a dollar in my pocket, "having no certain dwelling-place," and no father's house

to which to go to replenish my exchequer, or renew my wardrobe, I should "fall into divers temptations." In all countries, the evil generally balances the good. A missionary among savages has his trials, no doubt; and though I was traveling in the United States, I had mine: but if I could then have foreseen, or foreknown what I now know to be a fact, I might have found power to resist the enemy. I was traveling within the bounds of the manor of Cortlandt, which, in 1697, consisted of eighty-three thousand acres, but which by the time I was crossing it had been divided and subdivided a number of times among the different branches of the family. This immense tract of land was originally owned by the Indians, of whom it was purchased in different parcels from time to time, and at length secured by royal patent, from King William the Third to the Hon. Stephanus Van Cortlandt. "He was descended from one of the most noble families in Holland; their ancestors having emigrated thither when deprived of the sovereignty of Courland, in Russia. Two miles north of

Peekskill is located the property and residence of General Pierre Van Cortlandt, who derived his title to this portion of the ancient manor from his brother Gilbert, heir of his grand-aunt, Mrs. Gertrude Beekman, daughter of the first lord of the manor of Cortlandt. The situation of the estate is very fine, covering, as it does, some of the most graceful undulations of a hilly district, diversified with the richest scenery. The old brick mansion, erected A. D. 1773, occupies a very sequestered and romantic spot on the north side of the old post-road, leading from New-York to Albany. Some few years ago the bed-rooms in this ancient dwelling contained three curious pictures of full-length figures, representing John Van Cortlandt, as a boy, dressed in a long blue coat, reaching to the knees, with large cuffs turned up to the elbows, knee breeches, scarlet stockings, high-heeled shoes, and silver buckles, his right hand resting on a stag; Pierre, in a scarlet coat, with white silk stockings, and a grayhound by his side; Abraham, in a russet coat and red stockings, with high-heeled shoes and buckles.

These paintings are said to be above a hundred years old."—*Hist. Westchester Co.*

When I read this account a little more than a year ago, I was very desirous of seeing the old mansion as it was. But before I had an opportunity of doing so, the property had passed into other hands, and this part of the manor of Cortlandt, and the old mansion with it, was purchased by Mr. James Robertson, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Sullivan-street, New-York. Soon after the purchase was made, I visited the house, and passed through every room. The Van Cortlandts were all gone. The pictures were not there. Repairs and improvements were beginning to be made. The beautiful grove of locust and other trees in front of the house, was nicely trimmed. The carpenter, the mason, the paper-hanger, and the painter, were all busy at work, fitting up the old family mansion in the style of the houses in the upper part of the city of New-York. How evanescent are all worldly possessions! How fluctuating the glory of this world! The portraits before spoken of, which probably

retain their vivid coloring, adorn other walls; and the wearers of those ancient costumes, where are they? All gone, forever gone! When I passed this venerable mansion in the winter of 1819, and met the splendid carriage on the road as before stated, little did I think that in the winter of 1852, I should make that mansion my home for a night and a day; and that from one of those chamber windows I should look out upon the full moon in a cloudless night, and upon the rising sun the next morning. It is the same sun and moon that shed their light upon the hills and valleys of Cortlandt in years gone by, that now shine upon the estate and the residence of Alderman Robertson, at whose hospitable table I have, within a few months past, been so kindly entertained. The aspects of the sun, moon, and stars, and the appearances of nature, are as they were in ages past; but the generations of men and their works are ever changing.

A little to the south-east of General Van Cortlandt's place, on a rising ground near the road, stands one of the humblest, home-

liest, and yet most venerable places of worship in all Westchester county. It is called the Episcopal Church of St. Peter, was built in 1767, was consecrated by Dr. John Ogilvie, of New-York, the same year, and incorporated by royal charter in 1770. This edifice, it appears, has had service performed in it by twelve regular successors of the twelve apostles, if the assumptions of the Church of England and of the Protestant Episcopal Church are to be regarded as valid in this matter; and yet, either through the negligence of St. Peter, or some one else, the building is fast going to decay. Near this ancient structure are deposited the remains of Major John Paulding, one of the intrepid three who captured Major Andre, and thereby saved the country in the hour of peril. The citizens of New-York caused to be placed over his grave a white marble monument, consisting of a square pedestal and cone, thirteen feet high, with appropriate inscriptions, surrounded by an iron railing four feet in height. The whole makes a very neat appearance, alike honorable to the corporation of New-York,

and to the worthy patriot. The burying-ground is very extensive, and capacious enough, one might suppose, to contain all the inhabitants of Peekskill and of that part of Cortlandtville now lying in the immediate neighborhood of the cemetery; and it seems a pity that there is neither piety nor patriotism enough to put the old church, and the fence that surrounds it, in complete repair. A trifling expense, and a little labor, would make it one of the most pleasant burying-places in this part of the country.

A little east of the grave-yard the valley of the Peekskill exhibits a most singular appearance. It seems as if the waters of the deluge, coming down from the mountains, were in such haste to get to the North River, that they carried with them thirty or forty acres of good arable land, and left what they could not carry away, standing about one hundred feet above the level of the creek, leaving a bare spot with a sandy bottom, which for ages remained untilled. But the modern farmer was not to be deprived of the use of so good a piece of level

land, unencumbered by trees and free from rocks; he therefore turned the waters of a small brook upon it, and by a process of repeated irrigation, and plenty of manure, has obtained a very luxuriant meadow. The present occupant is Stephen, brother of the Rev. Daniel Curry. The farm has been in the possession of the family three or four generations. The first of the settlers married the sister of Bishop Moore. Near the old family dwelling stands a lofty pine, planted by one of a former generation; and across the way flourishes a majestic willow, whose wide-spreading branches and pendent boughs form a beautiful contrast to the inflexible pine. On the little stream that now flows occasionally over the great meadow, once stood a grist-mill; but the owner is no more, and the mill has gone to decay. Fed by the same stream are the wheels of an apparatus that now serves the purpose of a piano-manufactory, and the noise of the grist-mill has given place to the music of the piano. Not far from the piano-factory is the beautiful residence of the Hon. Mr. Varian, formerly mayor of the city of New-

York. The younger Mr. Varian and two of his sisters are the principal managers of a very flourishing Sabbath school, which is now kept in the old Episcopal Church.

While traveling in these regions, in the winter of 1819, I preached one evening at a private house near the big pond, now called Lake Mahopac, and stopped all night at Judge Crane's. The venerable patriarch was then between seventy and eighty years of age: but his imagination was as lively, and his memory as good, as that of many persons I have known at fifty; and, moreover, he was exceedingly polite. He told me that his grandfather's grandfather emigrated from England, about two centuries ago, which, if correct, must have been in or near the time of the Pilgrim fathers; and I think he said that he had fifty grandchildren then living. He was a Presbyterian himself, and I make no doubt his ancestors were Puritans of the true and genuine stamp.

CHAPTER V.

CORTLANDT CIRCUIT—CONCLUDED.

THE first of May, with its green grass and gay flowers, and buds and blossoms here and there, at length arrived. I had come to this country in the fall of the year, when, as the poet says,—

> "The south wind searches for the flowers
> Whose fragrance late he bore,
> And sighs to find them in the wood
> And by the stream no more."

It was, indeed, a dreary time, as far as natural scenery was concerned; and with the exception of a few days I spent on Long Island, where the surface of the ground was even and covered with a mantle of purest white, forming a pleasant contrast to the faded and dried leaves of the shrub oak, and the green branches of the stunted pine, traveling on horseback alone and among strangers, had nothing in it very cheering, exhilarating, or inviting. Of course I was very glad when it might be

said, "The winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." But where was I to look for the May bushes, the real hawthorn hedges, the daisies, the cowslips, the primroses, and the golden laburnums of my native land? I sought them, but I found them not! I listened for the evening song of the thrush and the blackbird, and the morning carolings of the linnet and the lark; but I heard them not! I looked for the "yellow-blossomed furze;" but there was none! I had almost adored these innocent and lovely specimens of the handiwork of the Divine Artist, and I now sighed to find the partners of my joyous hours gone! Yet even here, among the highlands and lowlands of Putnam and Westchester counties, I found something to assuage my grief and mitigate my sorrows. If the linnet and the lark did not sing in the morning, the robin had a very sweet note; and if I could not hear the warblings of the blackbird and the thrush at eventide, there was the song of

the whip-poor-will, and that was new to me. And if in the place of the hawthorn hedges, so richly clothed with beauty, so redolent with balmy odors, and so enlivened with song, there was nothing but the zig-zag fence and the rugged stone wall, and the nimble footsteps of the "little foxes," as I took them to be, bounding along the fence, as if they were trying to get ahead of the traveler, it answered just as well, provided I could only think so. And in addition to everything else, there was music in the water, and under the water, in every swamp,—a real concert, such as I never heard in my life before. A peach-tree in full blossom, and the three kinds of locust—the long-pod, the thorny, and the ragged bark—I had never seen in England. These were all new to me, and ever and anon attracted my attention. As it regards provision for the wants of the "inner man," as before stated, there was not only no lack, but more than was necessary. But the greatest luxury, at this season of the year, was the shad—a kind of fish not altogether unknown in the rivers of England, but much more common

and plentiful in the Connecticut and Hudson rivers than there. Fishing is a great business in the Hudson River in the spring of the year. How bountiful is Providence in sending an annual supply of so many millions of the finny tribes into our rivers and bays at every returning season! Not only are the wants of man thus anticipated, but the same good Being who thus remembers his rational dependents, provides also for the more helpless classes of his numerous family, green grass for the lambs, caterpillars for the little birds, and honey for the bees; therefore, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord."

The New-York Annual Conference of 1819, met in the city of Troy. My case was presented by the presiding elder, Rev. S. Merwin, and probably advocated by those who knew me. At all events the vote was in my favor, and I was appointed to travel with the Rev. Henry Stead on the Schenectady circuit. My colleague had been a presiding elder eight years, had just finished his last four on the Champlain district, and was a member of the bishops' council. On

hearing that I was recently from England, being an Englishman himself, he told the bishop that he thought if he would place me with him on the same circuit, he could probably teach me some things which I did not know, and which might be of use to me in after life. To this generous proposal of my friend and countryman, the bishop readily consented, and we were stationed together on the same circuit. On hearing of my appointment, I hastened to New-York. On my way down, I embarked on board a sloop at Sing Sing. It was at the time of the yearly meeting of Friends in New-York, and there were between twenty and thirty members of the society on board. Having lived seven years in a Friend's family, I was glad to meet with so many of the honest-looking brethren, and placid-looking sisters of this peace-loving society. Soon after we were "all aboard," and fairly "under weigh," I commenced a conversation with one, whose remarkably neat appearance, and well-favored countenance, attracted my attention. I soon found him to be as affable and communicative as I could desire. We conversed

freely, and I think profitably, on the things of the Spirit for some time. He seemed to think that I enjoyed the true light, and gave it as his opinion, that if I were faithful to the monitor within me, I should soon see that it was not right to preach in man's time and strength. But he needed not to have said this: for I always believed that "time and strength" are gifts of God; and that whenever he calls, qualifies, and commissions any one to preach his gospel, that person feels as Paul did, when he said, "I am debtor, both to the Greeks and to the barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise; so as much as in me is, *I am ready to preach the gospel to you also.*" But there was another remark of the Friend which excited my curiosity more than what he said about preaching in man's own time and strength. It was a remark concerning the marriage of young women who were members of their society, with young men who were members of other denominations. He even went so far as to say, that some of their "youngerly sisters" would rather marry out of society than in it. On this

subject much more was said, to which I listened with the most respectful attention. After this the Friend introduced me to his daughter, a fine-looking young woman, of about twenty summers, and desired her to make a good cup of tea for the stranger, which she did as readily as "Rebecca let down her pitcher upon her hand to give Abraham's servant drink." I was then invited to "sit by," and partake. After tea the subject of our former conversation was renewed. But I said nothing to the lady concerning those matters. Whether her father did or not, I cannot tell. Probably he concluded, from my appearance and observations, that I was so intent on other business, that I had no time to attend to such things. But there was something remarkable in the whole affair. It was with me a time of no ordinary interest. I had passed through a sort of preliminary probation, was received by the conference, and was on my way to New-York, in order to get fully ready for my circuit. Had a merchant offered me a clerkship, as was the case in Nova Scotia, I should have known

what to do; but when a Friend introduced me to his daughter, prefacing the act with so many kind remarks, I knew not what to make of it. Stranger as I was, in a strange land, an act of kindness so unexpected, and of such a nature, was a perfect enigma to me; and I cannot but regard it as one of the most singular incidents that ever occurred in the whole course of my life. Had I proceeded in this matter a few steps further, in the way so generously opened by the Friend, and had the young lady thought as well of me as her father seemed to, I might have found an easier way and a smoother path through life; but whether I should have been as useful I know not. Be that as it may, Providence seemed to point out a different course, and I am content.

Having made my visit to New-York, I hastened with all possible speed to my circuit. My first day's ride was to Salem—fifty miles—at which place the venerable Elijah Woolsey then lived. He had long been in the traveling connection; was well acquainted with my colleague, and the way that led to his house; and could

tell me all about the "Lights and Shadows" of itinerancy. I therefore called on him, and received from him such directions and advice as enabled me to prosecute my journey with great pleasure, and to reach the end of it in safety. After spending a night and part of the next day with the "supernumerary," I hastened to Peekskill, and tarried there all night with my friend Hanford. He was my friend from first to last, during my winter and spring campaign in those parts: and I am happy to say that he is as true and firm a friend as ever. Forty years has he been a pillar in the Church at Peekskill,—and has borne the burden and heat of the day with the firmness of a philosopher and the kindness of a Christian. God has said in his word, "Them that honor me I will honor;" and perhaps there are but few men in our Church whose history proves the truth of that sentence more than that of Andrew Hanford. To say more of him while living might not be agreeable to him or to his family, and therefore I must pass on.

On my arrival at Kingston, in Ulster

county, I called on Edward O'Neil, Esq. I was not the first Methodist preacher that he had entertained, for his house had been a place for preaching many years; and all I had to say was, that I was on my way to my circuit, and was recommended to call on him by the Rev. Elijah Woolsey. Brother O'Neil was from the Emerald Isle. He had known the heart of a stranger, and he showed me no little kindness. Since that time we have been brought into closer affinity by marrying cousins, and have enjoyed many very pleasant interviews at each other's houses. On Monday evening I arrived at Rensselaerville, the residence of my colleague, the Rev. Henry Stead. He lived about three miles north of the village, on a farm, the soil of which, with many others in that part of the country, belonged to the Hon. Stephen Van Rensselaer, the *patroon*, as he was generally called. With the face of the country I was not particularly pleased. I suppose that in reality it was as old as any other part of the creation, but in appearance it was new, rugged, and unsightly in the extreme; and not only was the earth out of

order, but the very heavens were in confusion, for as I arrived there in a dense fog I lost the points of the compass completely. The sky at length became clear, but the stars were not in the right place. Old Ursa Major seemed to be in the south, and the next morning the sun appeared to rise in the west; and so it appeared to be whenever I came round to that part of my circuit: but though everything out of doors was wrong, everything within was right. My friend and colleague, and his excellent wife, treated me with as much tenderness as if I had been their own son; and their children—William, Robert, and Dodson, Mary, Elizabeth, and Sarah—soon began to regard me as a brother. Of this kind family, the mother, one son, and two daughters are now numbered with the dead; but their spirits, I trust, are at rest with the saints in heaven.

CHAPTER VI.

SCHENECTADY CIRCUIT.

THE circuit on which I was appointed to travel took in a part of the following counties, viz.,—Albany, Schenectady, Montgomery, and Schoharie; and contained a great variety of soil, climate, cultivation, aspect, and scenery. It was bounded on the north by the Mohawk river, on the east by the Hudson, south by the Catskill mountains, and west partly by the Schoharie creek, and partly by regions beyond. In the center was the Heidelberg mountain, generally pronounced *Hellarbarrach.* This and the adjoining lands were commonly called *Patroon's* land, which being inferior to those in Western New-York, and not transferable, had been passed over by emigrants traveling from east to west, as not possessing the same attractions as those that may be bought by the settler, and by him owned in fee-simple. This part of the country, however, notwithstanding the tenure on

which it was held, was laid out in farms, and cultivated to some extent; and was, perhaps, as much like the new countries as any between Massachusetts and Michigan. In some places were dense forests, in others dismal swamps; in others rugged rocks, tall pines, girdled hemlocks, log-fences, log-bridges, and log-cabins; and in not a few, stumps in the lots, and stones of immovable dimensions in the roads. In some places the fences were made of stone, in others of board, and in others rails were piled, one upon another, zig-zag fashion, just as the soil required, and to suit the farmer's taste. Along the Schoharie and Mohawk streams, and on the Pine Plains, near Albany and Schenectady, the country was settled mostly by Dutch and German families, whose language, habits, and manners were as different from those in which I had been brought up as I should have expected to find in Germany or Holland. In other parts of the circuit the settlers were mostly from New-England, and even these differed in some things from those of my native land.

My first visit, after resting awhile at the

home of my colleague, was to the house of the Hon. Gideon Taber, Esq. He was a justice of the peace, and had been for two years a member of the State legislature. He also carried on the business of a farmer, tanner, currier, shoemaker, and saddle and harness-maker. My first introduction to this gentleman was so very agreeable, that for two years ensuing, whenever I came that way, I always made his house my home; and more than once, when I was overtaken by a dreadful snow-storm, or otherwise detained, have I found as pleasant a home there as in any other place. Many an interesting tale have I heard from the lips of my honorable friend, of the "doings of the members of assembly," and many an interesting document have I read in the "printed journals of the house." One of the sons of my host was a graduate of college, the other was a student of law; one daughter excelled in the art of drawing and painting, the other in conversational powers; and besides all this, the squire and his lady were some of the first Methodists in that part of the country: so that with a little

of jurisprudence, law, classical literature, and the fine arts, agreeable conversation, and old-fashioned Methodism, I felt myself vastly more at ease and contented, than I should have been in the family of a "right honorable" in the land of my birth.

On leaving the residence of the Hon. G. Taber, after my first visit, I rode to the north-east part of the Heidelberg, from which one of the finest views imaginable is to be enjoyed. As I looked away to the north, north-east and north-west, I could take in, at one view, an area of some thousands of square miles,—bordered on the north-east by the Green mountains of Vermont, and embracing within the panorama the whole county of Schenectady, and parts of Montgomery, Saratoga, Albany, Rensselaer, and Washington. After feasting my eyes for a while with this delightful prospect, I passed on to my first appointment in the town of Berne. Prior to this I had formed a resolution in my own mind never to preach twice from the same text, on the same circuit, during the first year of my probation. Bearing this in mind, I began with Genesis

i, 3: "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." The subject seemed to be a fruitful one on which to meditate, and as the thoughts rose in my mind I arranged them thus:—

I. The great advantages of light—natural, mental, spiritual, and eternal.

II. God has given sufficient light in these respects for life and happiness.

III. He has also given us powers of vision, without which light would be of no use to us.

IV. We are accountable for the use of these inestimable blessings.

After preaching, I went home with a man who had been brought up a Friend. I found afterward that he was not displeased with my remarks on *inward light*. He was not then a Methodist; but has since cast in his lot with us, and makes a very valuable member of the Church.

The plan of taking a new text every time had its advantages, and probably its disadvantages. On the one hand it obliged me to study, and made me familiar with the Bible. A circuit preacher, traveling on horse-

back from place to place, cannot very well take the whole of Clarke's Commentary and Cruden's Concordance in his saddle-bags; and in those days such helps were not found in every house, where it was the preacher's lot to tarry only for a night. What then was to be done? I thought the best way for me was to read the Bible in course, a chapter in the Old Testament and a chapter in the New, every day. By doing this regularly, I always had a subject on which to meditate when riding along the road from one appointment to another; and was generally prepared to bring it forward at the time required. By adhering to this plan I probably suffered a little in my reputation. In one place, where I selected my text from the third chapter of Genesis, one aged lady, who probably read the Bible more than any other book, said to her friend, as I afterward learned, "We could have read all that in the Bible." The subject was the Fall of Man; and probably I quoted a great many passages in proof of total depravity. In another place, and at another time, when preaching on the General Judgment, a man

afterward said to me: "Half your sermon was taken from the Bible." In another instance, when preaching from the sixth commandment, I let fall some expressions on the evils of carnal warfare, which gave great offense to some young men whose father had been an officer in the Revolutionary army. Years after this, on occasion of my revisiting that place, one of those young men dreamed that he and I fought a battle with muskets; that my gun was the longest, and that I conquered him. This shows, I think, that the impression occasioned by my remarks on war was very deep,—and yet nothing was farther from my intention than to stir up strife. Mr. Montgomery says of the well-tried sword of the good old Thomas Taylor, that,—

> "It was a two-edged sword,
> Of heavenly temper keen;
> It kindled and it silenced strife,
> Where'er it glanced between:"

alluding to the words of the apostle, Heb. iv, 12. Perhaps I was not as skillful in the word as I might have been,—for cer-

tain it is, that the sword I used "kindled strife," but did not silence it. The grace of God, however, in the end, made all right. All glory be to his excellent name. "When a man's ways please the Lord he makes his enemies to be at peace with him." The young man was eventually converted, and I escaped unhurt.

CHAPTER VII.

SCHENECTADY CIRCUIT—CONTINUED.

THE flowery month of June at last came round, and with all the beauty, fragrance, and melody peculiar to that season of the year in this part of the world; for though the State of New-York is farther from the pole and nearer the equator than any part of England, the spring is at least one month later than it is near London. I was therefore very glad when the first day of summer opened upon us. I was in the town of Berne, on or near the top of the Heidelberg mountain; and on Sunday morning, June 6th, feeling the need of retirement and solitude, I betook myself to the woods near the old meeting-house, in what used to be called "Pucker-street," and seated myself upon a verdant bank among the hemlock, and beech, and birch-trees, where the sound of the woodman's ax had not for a long time been heard. In that delightful retreat, the music of the feathered

tribes, the fragrance of the wild flowers, and the cool refreshing shade of lofty trees, all conspired to raise devotional feelings in my bosom. I opened my Bible on Solomon's Song ii, 11, 12; and meditated thereon till it was time to go to church. I had heard the Rev. Joseph Gostick preach from this text, and though I took no notes of his sermon, yet I remembered the outlines of his discourse, and found them to be an excellent help to me in the elucidation of this highly poetical and beautiful portion of holy writ. That my hearers were as much interested in my exposition as I was with his, I can hardly believe; and yet perhaps many will remember the words of the text as often as the season returns.

The same day, at two o'clock P. M., I preached at a school-house, near Warner's Lake, on the proper observance of the Christian Sabbath; and at six o'clock, in a log-house in the woods, near Beaver Dam. My host had taken up some new land, had cleared a portion of it, and built a barn and house thereon. The stumps of trees, whose trunks and branches had been removed

by the woodman's ax, were still standing within a short distance of the house. A few lofty pines, but a far greater proportion of sturdy hemlocks, and a great variety of other members of the forest family, in living verdure, stood all around me, and suggested the idea of preaching from Matt. iii, 10: "And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." A verse, also, which I have often read on a gravestone, in the Baptist burying-ground, at Malden, came powerfully to my recollection while preaching, and helped me to impress the solemn truths contained in the text upon my auditors. It was as follows:—

"Like crowded forest-trees we stand,
And some are mark'd to fall;
The ax will smite at God's command,
And soon shall smite us all."

After preaching, and while the good housewife was preparing supper, as the weather was very warm I took a walk over part of the little farm, and, before I returned, was overtaken, as I thought, with a shower of

phosphoric fire. The sparks flew in every direction, and yet I heard no noise. What to make of it I did not know, as I had never seen the like in England. As soon as I got to the house I asked the woodsman what it meant. "Why," said he, "they are lightning-bugs." "Lightning-bugs!" said I; "then are we going to have a hurricane, or what?" "O, no!" said he, "it is nothing but the fire-fly." "The fire-fly!" said I; "is there a great fire, then, near by?" "No," said he, "I'll show you soon." He then caught one of the living creatures, and I concluded that it was an American glow-worm with wings. So much for a Londoner's boasted knowledge of the world! My host was a married man, his wife was a pleasant little woman, and they had five as pretty-looking children as any I had seen. They occupied what might very properly be termed "a lodge in the wilderness;" but O the peace and harmony, the innocence and comfort, the health and happiness that abound in such a quiet nook as that in which this interesting and happy family resided!

"Far from the madd'ning crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life,
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way."

The next Wednesday, in going to my appointment, on one of the mountains near Old Schoharie, I was overtaken by a dreadful storm. The rain fell in torrents, and the wind blew so tremendously that buildings were unroofed, fences prostrated, and some very large pine-trees blown down across the road. What was to be done? The distance was too far to go back, and to go forward seemed impossible; but an expedient suggested itself: I dismounted, got on the tree as it lay across my path, whipped up my horse, and made him jump over. By this time I was thoroughly wet with the shower; and as I knew no one on the road, I made no great effort to obtain shelter from the storm, but passed on till it was over. At length the tempest abated, and I reached the place of my destination just as the setting sun broke forth, with unusual splendor, upon a tranquil world, after it had been agitated with thunder and light-

ning, and wind and rain, to a frightful degree. My home, that night, was at another log-house; but it was of larger dimensions than the one in which I slept on Sunday night, having a bed-room at one end, where a stranger might sleep as comfortably as in a palace. The farm, too, was more extensive, and in some parts under better cultivation. It was in the midst of pine-trees, of large and lofty dimensions. The proprietor owned a saw-mill in addition to his farm, and a fine garden, all which afforded him and his family a comfortable living. The garden seemed to be under the supervision of the wife and daughter; the one taking charge of those things that please the palate, and the other of those that gratify the sight. It was truly delightful to witness so much economy, neatness, and comfort, combined in the management of one single domain.

The next morning, in going from the mountain appointment to a place called Huntersland, I lost my track—there being no road except a beaten path, about wide enough for a horse to travel,—and before I

could get out of the woods, I had trouble enough to find the right way. But after rambling about for two or three hours, I found a path which led to the settlement. I put up at the tavern, the keeper of which was the class-leader. His brother was a local preacher. Both of them were good members of the Church. At my first appointment in this place, I had only fifteen hearers; but before I left the circuit, the congregation had increased tenfold, and the society was more than doubled. During the first winter we were favored with a great and good revival of religion; and after that, things went on very prosperously. Many a pleasant hour have I spent in that neighborhood, many a good meeting have I had with that people, and many a time have we sung together the sweet songs of Zion, till past the noon of night. Some of those who then belonged to the Church militant, have joined the Church triumphant; others are patiently waiting till their change; and some, who were converted during that revival, are filling important offices in the Church in other lands.

The next Sabbath I preached at Rensselaerville—a beautiful little village in the midst of hills, about twenty-five miles southwest of Albany. "The township," says the historian, "was first settled during the revolution, by young men mostly from Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Dutchess county, New-York. They built their log-cabins, cooked their provisions, remained during the warm weather, and in winter returned east. These first settlers were very poor. For the first year or two, not a house was owned within a mile of the village, and they were obliged to carry their maple sugar twenty or thirty miles on their backs to exchange it for corn, and then return in the same manner." During the revolution, the inhabitants suffered much from the tories and the Indians. Barber, in his "Historical Collections of the State of New-York," relates a most tragical scene that occurred in the neighborhood of Rensselaerville, in which a whole family, except two boys and a young man, were most wantonly murdered by the Indians. "In this cruel and bloody massacre eight persons

were killed and three carried captive far away."

By the time that I visited this place the miseries of war were over, except in the memory of the sufferers, some of whom it was my lot to know; and peace, with its attendant blessings, had made the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. In 1819 there were four places of worship in the township, three in the village, and one within a short distance. On the hill, north, was the Methodist; in the valley, south, stood the Episcopal; and on a rising ground, west, the Presbyterian,—all in sight of each other. The building occupied by the Methodists was not finished; and though it answered very well in summer, it was not so well adapted for worship in winter. But the Episcopalians, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Fuller, kindly allowed us to occupy theirs on every alternate Sabbath, which was our preaching day, and that on which they had no service. By this arrangement, our people had an opportunity of worshiping with theirs, and theirs with ours. The friend, at whose house I made

my home when in Rensselaerville, had a son who sometimes took care of my horse, and who, since that time, has filled the office of principal of Wilbraham Academy and that of a stationed preacher in the city of Boston. It is astonishing what improvements have been made in our Church by means of education. Five or six colleges, and twice as many academies, have risen up within twenty years.

On the Wednesday following my appointment at Rensselaerville, I rode to Scotland, and made my stay, while there, at the house of Doctor Day. The doctor had a very pleasant residence, in a good neighborhood, about twelve miles from Albany. He was a man of reading, and had a fine collection of valuable books, which, with the doctor's agreeable conversation, and the kindness of his wife, made my stay, when there, very pleasant. There were also some fine German families in the neighborhood, who would fain have taught me how to read and speak their language; but my stay was too short, and my inclination did not favor the project. I fancied that to become proficient in

any one branch of literature or science, would require more time and attention than I could spare, and therefore I gave it up, and continued to act upon a maxim I had unfortunately adopted in early life, to wit:

> "Let all the foreign tongues alone,
> Till you can speak and write your own."

My next appointment was at the old Glassworks, on the great Western Turnpike, eight miles west of Albany. Here I found a small class, mostly Irish; but so exceedingly kind were they, that, as Mrs. Nicholson observes in her interesting book of travels in Ireland, they gave me "a hundred thousand welcomes" whenever I came to the place. Here also I found one who had lately come from the Emerald Isle, a young man of great promise, who was teaching school, and at the same time preparing himself for college. He afterward graduated at Union, Schenectady, and has since been a professor in one of our western literary institutions. From the Glassworks I proceeded across the Pine Plains, and past the Shakers' settlement at Niskayuna, to the

residence of Mr. Isaac Lawson, about two miles west of the city of Troy, where I found a resting-place, that might very properly have been denominated "Sweet Home." Such, indeed, it was to me two or three days at a time every four weeks. The family consisted of father and mother, one son, and one daughter; all pious, and all exceedingly kind. The situation of the house was very pleasant, on a rising ground, sloping gently all the way down to the river, opposite the beautiful city of Troy. The school-house, in which we used to preach once in two weeks on Sabbath morning, was at the corner of a piece of woods, in a lovely spot; and the congregation, though small, was one of the most attentive of all on the circuit. As oft as I returned to this corner of the vineyard, everything appeared just what, and where, and as it ought to be. The sun rose and set precisely where it should. The stars were in the right place. The river ran the right way, and the people were of the right sort. Father Lawson had been an officer in the revolutionary war, a true patriot then, and now as "valiant for

the truth" as formerly for liberty. He enjoyed a good meeting right well; and would often speak of the glories of the upper and better world in strains amounting almost to ecstasy. Mother Lawson was a woman of well-informed mind, but of rather a sorrowful spirit, owing probably to great physical debility. She loved the Scriptures, and could quote them with great facility and appropriateness. Joseph was a most estimable young man, of fine mind, and generous feelings, and his sister was, as all young women ought to be, amiable, modest, and pious. In addition to the family proper, there was one who frequently made it her home there several weeks at a time. In our prayer-meetings she was very helpful; her language was singularly proper, and her pronunciation beautifully euphonious and correct. Of her sincere piety there was not the least doubt; and I have since heard it remarked, that she was greatly instrumental in promoting a revival in the neighborhood, during which not far from a hundred souls were brought into the kingdom of God.

On one occasion while in this neighborhood, I visited the Shaker village, at Niskayuna. It was in the winter season. My friend, Joseph Lawson, was going past the settlement, and took me there in his sleigh in the forenoon, and called for me on his return in the evening. This gave me an opportunity of spending a considerable part of the day with the Shakers. They received me kindly, and entertained me courteously. I conversed with them freely, and asked them many questions, to all which they paid respectful attention, and answered, probably to their own satisfaction, though not to mine. "They own," says Barber, in his Historical Collections, "two thousand acres of good land, well cultivated, and divided into four farms, on each of which is a *family*, the whole amounting to about *eighty* persons of both sexes and all ages." The society at this place was established by a woman named Ann Lee, who, with her husband and a few others, came from England in 1774, and settled here in 1776. "This woman was born at Manchester in 1758, and died at Niskayuna in 1784, aged twenty-

six years. The following lines are extracted from a poem, entitled "*A Memorial to Mother Ann*," and will serve to show in what light she is viewed by her followers :—

"About four years she labor'd with the attentive throng,
While all their sins they open'd, and righted every wrong;
At length she closed her labors, and vanish'd out of sight,
And left her faithful children increasing in the light.

"How much they are mistaken who think that Mother 's dead,
When through her ministrations so many souls are fed!
In union with the Father, she is the second Eve,
Dispensing full salvation to all who do believe."

The following are some of the questions that I put to the elders, and their answers :—

Q. What are your ideas of Christ ?

A. As to his mortal body, he had no existence till born of the Virgin Mary. As to his spirit, it is from eternity; and as believers partake of his spirit, they may reckon their genealogy from eternity.

Q. In what light do you regard the Holy Ghost ?

A. The Holy Ghost is the real mother of the spirit of Christ.

Q. What are your views with respect to the fall of man, as recorded in the Scriptures?

A. We consider the whole account figurative, or allegorical.

Q. Did not Christ sanction marriage?

A. He associated with publicans and sinners. He neither sanctioned nor disapproved of marriage; but took that opportunity to show forth his power.

Q. Whom do you worship?

A. We do not hold to the worship of saints. We do not worship the body of Christ, but the spirit that was in him, and the spirit that was in Mother Ann also.

Q. If you have the true gospel, as you say you have, ought you not to go out into all the world, and preach it to every creature?

A. Perhaps the time is not come for them to receive it; it would be casting pearls before swine.

Q. But if any should die without the light of this gospel, what would become of them?

A. They will have it in another world. This body has nothing to do with a probationary state. Christ went, after his crucifixion, and preached to the spirits in prison.

Q. If our day of probation does not end with this life, why may we not live as mankind did in the days of Noah?

A. Noah was a preacher of *righteousness*, but he did not preach the *gospel;* for the gospel was not then known. If I am called to-day, that is in this life, this is my day of visitation.

Q. What are your ideas respecting the resurrection?

A. It is not a resurrection of this mortal frame, but of the spirit.

Q. On what do you ground your dancing in public worship?

A. This was in the *gift* at first.

Q. Have you any worship in the family?

A. We all kneel at meals, and pray morning and evening, and when we go to bed, and when we rise, and sometimes we *labor* in our family worship.

Q. What is labor?

A. Dancing.

At dinner-time a table was set in the room where we had our conversation; they invited me to sit by and eat, but would not eat with me. At supper-time the matron took me into the women's apartment, made tea for me, and served it herself, but would not eat with me. At both meals the table was bountifully supplied with the best the house afforded. But though everything was in the nicest order, I saw nothing, and heard nothing, to induce me to think favorably of their system.

CHAPTER VIII.

SCHENECTADY CIRCUIT—CONTINUED.

My next Sabbath appointment was at Charleston, on the west side of the Schoharie Creek, and about forty miles from Albany, at which place I preached in the forenoon; at another in the afternoon; and at another in the evening. Having now gone round my circuit as far as Sabbath appointments were concerned, I was ready on Monday morning to start for

THE FIRST CAMP-MEETING.

I had read in my native country of these extraordinary gatherings, and felt a great desire to attend one. I had heard father Halsted, of Rye, speak of them in very glowing terms, and this increased my desires to see them. I had heard others speak of them as the best means of grace they ever attended, and of course my expectations of good were raised to the highest pitch; nor was I greatly disappointed. The night pre-

ceding the camp-meeting, I stayed at the house of Stephen G. Whitehead, in Schenectady. He was, I believe, formerly a traveling preacher; and on the day appointed I rode with him and several others to the place of the meeting. It was in a fine grove, near the Mohawk river, about seven miles from the city of Troy, eight from Albany, and eight from Schenectady. As I entered the avenue that led to the encampment, I felt unusually solemn; and as I thought of the nature and object of the meeting, my attention was suddenly arrested by the sound of many voices resounding among the trees. In a moment the circle of the tents appeared, and the stand from which Zion's watchmen were to sound the alarm, was full in view,—benches were neatly placed in order in front of the stand, —fires were burning in rear of the tents, the curling smoke of which seemed like incense rising to the skies, and to my mind was beautifully emblematic of the sacrifice of praise and prayer, which had begun to ascend from the hearts and voices of the true worshipers. Since then I have thought,

What a difference between the circumstances under which these fires were kindled, and those of the Indian councils and the camp-fires of Saratoga, which in years and ages past had burned near this place! And I have said in my heart, Blessed be God for civilization, and peace, and camp-meetings! But to return. The preachers, as I entered their tent, were deliberating on the order to be observed throughout the meeting. This matter being settled, the trumpet was sounded for preaching, the people soon assembled, a hymn was sung, prayer was offered, and the Rev. Sherman Miner delivered the first discourse on the evil and destructive nature of sin, from Hosea xiii, 9: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help." His manner was solemn and dignified, and his speech, though not with enticing words of man's wisdom, was calculated to make a deep impression upon the sinner's heart. The rain prevented further exercises at the stand; but before it had subsided, a prayer-meeting was commenced in the Albany tent. The preacher who took the lead, gave a warm

and energetic exhortation, and followed it by fervent supplication to the throne of grace. Several others followed in the latter exercise, while shouts and praise from joyful lips made the solitary places of Niskayuna rejoice with joy and singing. Here a free-born citizen of Columbia, a native of England, an emigrant from Ireland, a wanderer from Scotland, and a considerable number of converted Dutch, all united in celebrating the praises of the common Saviour; for God had given them one heart and one way.

In the evening, the Rev. Jacob Hall preached the second sermon from James v, 16: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." This discourse was well calculated to impress the minds of Christians with the necessity of fervent and continued prayer. After sermon Noah Levings gave an exhortation, very ingenious and very pertinent. The germs of that native talent for which the doctor, in after years, was so popular, showed itself in that exhortation as much as in any subsequent discourse I ever heard him deliver. After him S. Luckey gave another

exhortation, pointed and profitable. The presiding elder concluded the exercises at the stand, after which some went to their homes, some to their tents, to sing and pray a little longer, and some to their slumbers, in order to recruit their wasted strength, that they might, without distraction, wait upon the Lord the coming day.

The next morning, by five o'clock, the voice of praise and prayer was heard from many tents. Poets often admire the warblings of the feathered tribes, and the echo of their sweet carolings among the trees of the forest; but here were sights and sounds that might have caused an embassy of angels to *pause*, if they had been on the wing, speeding their way from the high court of heaven to some distant orb, with a message of mercy to its guilty inhabitants, if any of them had "sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression;" and Heaven would have forgiven that pause, for it is not likely that such sounds had ever been heard in those forests since the fall of Adam.

At ten o'clock A. M., the Rev. William Thacher, of Schenectady, preached a very

ingenious sermon from Psalm cx, 2, 3: "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," &c. Having some knowledge of the Hebrew, the preacher boldly ventured on a different rendering of the passage, in order to clear the inspired penman of the charge of teaching a doctrine at variance with the other parts of the word of God. The reader who wishes to see what a wrong use has been made of this text, how it may be translated so as to convey the true sense of the original, and what use may be made of it, may find sufficient for his purpose in Dr. Adam Clarke's Notes on the place.

At two o'clock P. M., the Rev. Joseph Crawford, of Albany, delivered a powerful discourse against Antinomianism, from the words of St. Peter, 2 Epistle, i, 10; "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall." This is a grand text from which to preach the true Scriptural doctrine of final perseverance; but, alas! how many, trust-

ing to the fatal delusion of "once in grace, always in grace," or if they fall they can rise again by their own efforts, make shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience, and bring discredit on the truth of God. After the above discourse the Rev. Joshua Soule commenced giving an exhortation, but was prevented from finishing it by a violent shower; but for this disappointment he made ample amends at five o'clock, in a truly evangelical discourse on Rom. viii, 1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." At the close of this discourse, an old gentleman, a Dutchman, slapped me on the knee, as I sat by him, and said, with great earnestness, "*Dat was de very bottom of de gospel!*"

On Thursday forenoon, at ten o'clock, the venerable Freeborn Garrettson took for his text, Joel iii, 12–14: "Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about," &c. The discourse was on the final judgment of the human race; and it really seemed as if the hour

of judgment was drawing near, while the aged veteran was describing the awful realities of that day when countless "multitudes" shall meet in the "valley of decision." The memory of that morn, though more than thirty years have since passed away, is as fresh as ever, and the burden of that discourse I shall not soon forget. Two sentences especially, which fell from the lips of the preacher, while he was describing the process of "putting in the sickle," (ver. 13,) I hope to remember as long as I live: they were very brief, but very pointed—"*Sin makes us ripe for hell!—holiness for heaven!*" but to realize the full import of these words one must have been present at the scene, and seen and heard for himself. There were about fifteen preachers on the stand, of whom seven were, or had been, presiding elders,—and Mr. Garrettson was the oldest of them all. He had labored in the itinerant field forty-four years, and seemed to stand on the verge of the eternal world; and when he uttered those words, the fullest conviction of their truth glowed in his countenance, sparkled in his eye, appeared

in every gesture, and filled the fullest intonations of his voice. When father Garrettson had laid down his well-tried sword, brother Samuel Luckey rose and wielded, for half an hour or more, a controversial one, the occasion of which was a debate in which he had been engaged before preaching with a minister of another persuasion. In the course of the debate he had given the gentleman some cogent reasons in favor of the doctrines held by the Methodists; and in the exhortation he gave a summary of them in regular detail. The whole, I thought, was well done. At two o'clock the Rev. D. Ostrander preached a very excellent discourse on the sufficiency of divine revelation, from Luke xvi, 31: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." From what I could judge, the power of the Lord was felt under this sermon. Between this and the evening preaching the official members of the circuit held a quarterly conference in the preachers' tent; and at the same time other members of the Church, from the different circuits

and stations, were engaged in a prayer-meeting in front of the stand. I was necessarily engaged in the business of the conference, but I understood that the brethren had a joyful time. In the evening, the Rev. William Ross, of Troy, preached a neat and well-digested discourse on the parable of the *leaven hid in three measures of meal;* Mr. Chase followed him in a brief and pertinent exhortation; and after him the Rev. Elijah Chichester, of Lansingburg, addressed the careless and impenitent in a style calculated to arouse and alarm them. Some of the hearers were no doubt profited, but "the rest," it is to be feared, "were hardened." How sinners can resist, and turn aside the force of such powerful appeals, it is not as easy to account for as it is to believe the fact!

The congregations throughout the day, during preaching, were numerous, and in general attentive. The intermediate exercises of prayer and singing, were conducted in an orderly manner, and were attended with manifest good to many souls. To the idle spectator, and perhaps to the stranger,

the praying circles presented a scene of noise and confusion, not at all in accordance with his preconceived notions of order and decorum. Within the sound of each other's voice, five or six persons might be heard praying at the same time. But this did not divert the mind of each suppliant from the special object of his request; for, as Solomon says, "Every one knew his own sore, and his own grief." And to comfort those that mourned, there were, at the same time, those who exhorted the wounded in spirit to look to the great Physician of souls, reminding them of his gracious promises of mercy and pardon; while from among the gazing multitude occasionally one, and then another, would press his way to the mercy-seat, trembling, weeping, crying, fainting, swooning, and falling down, would perhaps remain under the power of God for some time, and then suddenly come to himself in the enjoyment of conscious pardon, and rise up and praise God with all his might and strength. Such exercises, and such results, have often puzzled the wise men of this world, who never felt the work

of the Spirit on their heart. But this need be no cause of wonder, if we believe that God is omnipotent; and that He who can forgive sins, can as easily do it in a moment as in any length of time; and that he can as easily give the evidence of the reality of the work, as do the work itself. But, aside from all reasoning on the subject, we have the indubitable evidence of the fact, that thousands have gone to camp-meetings the willing slaves of sin, and have returned the happy and rejoicing servants of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

On Friday morning, between eight and nine o'clock, a love-feast was held in the grove; and now was the time for the friends of camp-meeting to bear testimony to the good resulting from these extraordinary means of grace. Among these, not one had changed his mind with regard to the propriety or utility of such meetings. The presiding elder, on this occasion, when he saw what great things God had done for his people, and for impenitent sinners, felt so much of the overwhelming power of saving grace, that with tears flowing down his

cheeks, he exclaimed, "I feel like a little child." He then told us that God had converted three of his children at camp-meeting; and in doing this he looked, indeed, as simple, as humble, as happy, as joyful, as a little child! When the hour of parting arrived, the preachers and friends took an affectionate farewell of each other, under the solemn impression that they should never again see each other all together on such an occasion. We then left the ground, and departed, each one to his temporary or permanent place of abode.

The next morning, as I rode to my appointment, I passed by the hallowed spot, but not without visiting it once more. On entering the avenue I, almost unconsciously, alighted from my horse, walked slowly round, looked at the place where each tent stood,—not as the warrior looks upon the battle-field the day after the victory; but as the traveler looks upon the plains of Moab, where Israel was encamped in the days of Moses,—then went in front of the stand, sat down on a bench, and gave a moment's liberty to my imagination, and

wrote down with my pencil, on a blank leaf of my pocket-journal, the following reflections :—

"Where are the ministers of God, who yesterday occupied that important stand? Where are the friends of Jesus, that filled each tent on the ground which I now survey? Where are the saints, and where are the sinners, who so lately assembled in this grove? They are gone! Some to the cities adjacent, some to their farms, and others to their merchandise. Many of them I shall see no more till we meet in the 'valley of decision.' How many of the faithful will hold out to the end, and receive a crown of life? Shall one of those precious souls who were so faithfully warned in this place, be found on the left hand of the Judge eternal in that day? Alas! no one can tell! But what has become of the sweet sounds of music that so lately charmed my ear and warmed my heart? They are vanished in air. All is silent now; and I hear nothing, save the blowing of the wind, the rustling of the leaves, and the singing of the birds around. But I cannot forget the sound of

the gospel-trumpet, the words of exhortation, the cries of the penitent, the prayers of the pious, and the rejoicings of new-born souls, which I so lately heard. Those sounds, so pleasant to my ear, have all died away, unless it is the echo of them which I seem to hear in my imagination. Those exercises are past; those seasons of prayer and praise are over and gone. 'But they have left a fragrance upon the mind, and the remembrance of them is sweet.'" At this distance of time, there are some things that give to the remembrance of that meeting a most melancholy interest. Of the *fifteen* preachers who were on the stand while father Garrettson was preaching, eight have gone to their long home; namely, F. Garrettson, D. Ostrander, E. Smith, S. Draper, W. Ross, J. Crawford, N. Levings, and S. Whitehead, a local preacher, who accompanied me to the meeting.

CHAPTER IX.

SCHENECTADY CIRCUIT—CONTINUED.

THE FIRST REVIVAL.

Our second quarterly meeting for the year 1819 was held in Rensselaerville, begining on Saturday, the 12th of September. Our presiding elder, Rev. E. Smith, preached an excellent sermon on the subject of holiness, from 1 Pet. i, 15. The discourse was rendered a blessing to many souls; but perhaps to none more than to sister Gale, of Huntersland. She returned from the meeting with her spiritual strength renewed, and resolved from that time to seek and serve the Lord more earnestly herself, and to pray for a revival of religion among her neighbors. She took an early opportunity to communicate her impressions to sister Joice, and some others, who were unanimously of opinion that they ought to establish regular female prayer-meetings in their neighborhood, though there were but about

fifteen persons belonging to the class in that place at that time. At the first meeting there were only three present when the exercises commenced; but they had not been praying long, before two of the brethren, S. and L. Joice, joined their little band. While they were conversing together, it occurred to one of the brethren that he was then in the very room, and near the spot, where God converted his soul. At the thought of this his heart rejoiced, and he shouted the praises of God. This was on Thursday evening. They then appointed a public prayer-meeting to be held at brother Peleg Cook's, on the Sunday evening following. At that prayer-meeting one young woman was awakened; and one of the sisters was so exercised in spirit, that she lost her bodily strength. This circumstance strengthened the hands, and encouraged the hearts of the little flock, and it also stirred up the enemy to declare war openly, so that on the Thursday following, the time appointed for a regular prayer-meeting, a brother of the young woman who was awakened on Sunday evening, a stout young

man, about twenty-four years of age, went down to the school-house where the meeting was held, full of the spirit of the Evil One, with a determination to hinder his sister from seeking the salvation of her soul; or if his thoughts did not reach so high as that, he resolved to call her away from the meeting. But though he used various efforts to effect his object, he did not succeed; and finding that his sister was decided, he made up his mind to stay to see the end. But hardened as he was, he was not beyond the reach of mercy; for before the exercises closed, the power of the Lord came mightily upon him, and made him tremble. He strove against it with all his might, till at length, about eleven o'clock, when the meeting was drawing to a close, he was led to cry for mercy. He had, for some time, entertained strong prejudices against one of the most pious of our female members, (the one that lost her strength on Sunday evening,) because of her plain dealing with sinners, and the active part she took in the prayer-meetings; but no sooner was he humbled to the dust,

than he called aloud to her in the congregation to pray for him. He did not obtain remission of sins that night, but continued seeking the Lord the two following days. The next Sabbath, after meeting, he and another young man, under similar concern of mind, went into the woods, and while they prayed together there, the Sun of Righteousness arose upon his mind, dispersed his fears, and cheered his sorrowing heart. The same evening, at the prayer-meeting, he bore testimony to the truth of the religion of Christ, having experienced it, in its life and power, in his own soul. On the Thursday evening before mentioned, another young man was powerfully convinced of sin. He also tried to "shake off his guilty fears," by leaving the school-house, and engaging in some foolish diversions. But conviction rolled on him like a tide, and carried him into the meeting again, where he was soon seen on his knees praying for mercy. In a few days he also found peace. The same evening another man, who had been a servant of sin thirty years or more, was deeply convinced of sin.

In the midst of his distress, he called aloud to brother S. Joice to pray for him. He did not obtain relief that night; but the Sabbath morning following found peace in believing, among the trees of the wood. The same evening he also gave a clear account of his conversion, and exhorted his friends and neighbors to seek the Lord; and told them, that in one short day he had experienced more true joy, than in all the years he had lived in sin.

At the next regular prayer-meeting, while brother S. Joice was describing the manner in which Zaccheus of old found the Lord, a woman cried out, "Where shall *I* find him?" He exhorted her to kneel down and pray. She did so, and he joined in prayer with her; but before he had finished, she rose up and testified that the Lord had forgiven her sins. Then turning to her mother, whom she had many times grieved, she said, "Where is my poor old mother, whom I have so often misused?" and in a most affecting manner entreated her forgiveness. She then turned to her husband and to his parents, and asked their forgive-

ness, and exhorted them to serve God. Her husband was soon after converted. The same evening, a young girl was in great distress of mind for nearly an hour. Her brother, a skeptical young man, tried to dissuade her from yielding to such impressions; but she in return desired him to desist, and to go away from her—which he did, and then she soon found peace to her soul.

On the Sunday following, a number of the friends from Rensselaerville went down to Huntersland, to assist the brethren to carry on the meeting. During these exercises, the greater part of the unconverted desired to be prayed for. Many prayers were offered; some of the penitents experienced the consolations of the gospel, and several others were struck under conviction. The work of the Lord now went on gloriously, so that in less than four weeks from the time it commenced the change was so great that we seemed almost to be in a new world. It was like the breaking up of a long and dreary winter, and the opening of a most delightful spring.

Previous to this revival our week-day congregations numbered from fifteen to twenty-five, according to the state of the weather; but now the school-house was crowded to excess. At my first appointment after the revival commenced, twelve persons joined the Church on probation; and in a little time the work spread throughout the whole neighborhood, extended to Rensselaerville, and continued until about sixty persons were the hopeful subjects of saving grace, among whom were three members of the family of my worthy colleague; and one of the converts*—a brother of the young woman who was awakened at the first meeting on Sunday evening—afterward became a traveling preacher in the province of Upper Canada. He was a delegate to our General Conference, in 1844, was afterward sent as a delegate to the British Conference, and is now the book-steward in the Canadian connection.

* Rev. Anson Green.

WATCH-NIGHT.

The manner in which the Methodists spend the last hours of the departing year, is very different from that in which our forefathers spent theirs, before the commencement of that revival of primitive Christianity which took place under the labors of Whitefield and the Wesleys, about the middle of the last century. Our custom, as most people know, is to hold a watch-night in every place where we can have a congregation, and a sufficiency of help to conduct the exercises in a proper manner,—and to continue them until the opening of the new year. I have already described the first that I attended in this country, which was held at Hempstead, on Long Island, Dec. 31, 1818; but that was before I joined the conference. The one I am now about to describe, was held in a private house, near the glass-works, on the Great Western Turnpike, eight miles from Albany. The society at that place consisted of eleven persons; but my congregation, on that occasion, numbered only *ten*. To these how-

ever I preached a regular discourse, as well as I was able, from the words of Jacob when he stood before Pharaoh, Gen. xlvii, 8, 9: "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been," &c. There was no need that I should injure myself by loud speaking, for all could hear; but there seemed to be a necessity for lengthening my discourse, in order to fill up the time. I therefore held on to a late hour, but not quite so long as Paul at Ephesus. When I had done, two of the brethren gave each a word of exhortation. We then had a short season left, which we spent in conversation, singing, and prayer,—and thus concluded the year. The same evening, in another neighborhood, three men of a character very different from the little band with which I was associated, kept a very different kind of watch-night. After leaving their homes, they called at a store to get some liquor: the merchant being a Quaker, and a discerning man, refused to let them have any. They went to another store, and procured four or five quarts, of which they drank so freely that they could not reach home.

Two of them died from the effects of the liquor and the cold,—the other barely escaped.

At the expiration of six months, I had added to the list of my acquaintance the goodly number of five hundred pious Christians, whose cheerful looks, kind words, and courteous behavior, made my duty in general very pleasant. My labors, to a mind and body properly fitted for the work, would have been tolerably easy,—to me they were sometimes hard, but never oppressive. My path, if not decked with flowers, was cheered with many acts of kindness; and the scenery, which by nature was rugged enough to be entitled to the epithet "romantic," was, nevertheless, enlivened by a sufficient variety to make it agreeable. The storms of winter had not as yet kept me from any of my appointments,—but I was able to fill them all as promptly as the day returned. The sunshine of prosperity, and the pleasant breeze of fraternal encouragement increased my happiness, without endangering my safety. The Lord had graciously revived his work nearly one hundred converts having

been added to the Church; death had not been permitted to rob the societies of more than one or two of our members; and apostasy, which is the worst kind of death, had obliged us to cut off only one: for all which I then felt, and still feel truly thankful. But one extreme generally follows another in the natural world, as well as in things political, moral, and religious; and as the summer had been extremely hot and dry, and the fall remarkably auspicious to the farmer, the merchant, and the traveler, the following winter was marked by a severity of cold and a depth of snow, as much surpassing those of the preceding, as the height of the Catskill mountains exceeds that of the little hills of Long Island.

About the middle of January, 1820, after fulfilling my appointments at the meeting-house, in the township of Berne, and at the school-house, in Beaver Dam, I returned with my friend Gideon Taber, Esq., to his hospitable dwelling, near the former place. Here I was detained until the Friday following, in consequence of one of the severest snow-storms that had covered the top of old

Heidleberg, with a mantle of white, within the last forty years. During my pleasant sojourn with this kind family, I employed myself partly in reading the printed journals of the house of assembly, of which my honorable friend had been a member for two years, and in partly writing letters to my transatlantic friends.

After this the cold increased greatly; and by the second week in February, we had another very heavy fall of snow. The roads were full, the fences covered, and the track soon became invisible. In going from one appointment to another, I missed my way more than once, and twice at least was almost smothered in the drifts. About the middle of the month a rapid thaw diminished the snow-banks, and filled the roads with water, so that it was almost impossible to travel from one place to another. But the cold soon returned, and successive snow-storms filled up the roads again to a greater depth than before, in consequence of which I failed in reaching my appointments several times; and as many times, when I did reach the place, was disappointed of a congre-

gation. On one occasion the snow was so deep, that it took me nearly all day to go about ten miles. I was on horseback, but the drifts had so encumbered the road, that it was almost impossible to get through them. On another occasion, in trying to find the road, where the snow was so deep that it covered the stone-wall, the horse plunged into it, and with a desperate effort got over the fence, and left me and the sleigh on the other side. There I was in a sad predicament—my horse on one side the fence, and I in the sleigh on the other. To go forward was out of the question, and to retreat was impossible. At every plunge, the horse sunk deeper into the snow. To lift the sleigh over the fence was out of my power, and the traces were drawn so tight that I could not unhitch them. At length I resolved to cut loose and go to the nearest house, and ask for help. The friend at whose house I called, not only rendered me the needful aid, but kindly entertained me, and took care of my horse till the roads were opened, and I was able to proceed. On another occasion my horse

took fright, and ran much faster than I deemed safe, either for him or for me. I tried to hold him in, but that did not please him; so I let him regulate his speed to suit himself; but in turning a corner, the sleigh upset, and left me in the road. My horse went on at full speed till he came to a place of entertainment. There he slackened his pace, and the good man of the house, who happened to be in the road at the time, caught hold of the lines and led him to the stable, and kept him there till I came up. Here we both rested and took some refreshment, and then went on again. But we had not traveled far, before my horse began "to feel his oats," and wished to run again. I let him go till we came to a long and pretty steep hill. By this time the refractory beast seemed inclined to take it moderately. "Nay," said I, "you would run for your own pleasure a little while ago, now you shall go it for mine;" and so saying, I applied the whip, and kept him going till he was tired. After that he never ran away with me again.

On another occasion, when I was at the

extreme north-west part of my circuit, in the town of Florida, over against Amsterdam, another storm came on in the night. The snow was now nearly four feet deep in the woods, where there was no drift, and the roads were almost impassable. My route lay from Florida through Duanesburgh to Berne. It was on that road I met with the disasters before mentioned; and as I had no desire to run the risk of being overtaken again in like manner, I directed my course to the east. The snow, which began to fall overnight, turned to sleet in the morning, and then to rain, freezing as it fell. It soon formed a crust of ice on the surface of the snow, from a quarter of an inch to half an inch in thickness. After traveling all day in the storm, I arrived in the evening at the house of my friend Lawson, in Watervleit, wet and weary, hungry and cold, and almost discouraged. But the kindness with which I was received at the preacher's home, and the comforts of the evening, made me almost forget the toils of the day. On the Friday following, I traveled about twenty-one miles, mostly on

the Great Western Turnpike; but I had to turn out of the beaten track into the snow-banks crusted with ice so often, that by the time I got to my journey's end, my horse's feet and legs were in a sorry plight. The farmers coming in from the country with heavy sleighs loaded with grain, claimed more of the road than belonged to them, and my poor horse having the lighter load, had to turn out and break the icy crust, perhaps not less than twenty times. After this I was gratified with

A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT.

Every tree, shrub, and plant, in the grove through which I passed, was covered with ice, which sparkled and glittered in the morning sun, and made them look like transparent glass. To gratify the vanity of an empress of Russia, a palace, fifty-six feet long, eighteen wide, and twenty-one high, was built in 1840, all of ice; and to encourage industry and promote improvement in the arts and sciences, a "Crystal Palace," of iron and glass, during the year 1851, was built in London; and Dr. Olin,

in his book of travels, tells of a petrified forest in Egypt. Neither of these have I seen; but in the month of March, 1820, soon after the storm of snow, sleet, hail, and rain, just mentioned, I witnessed the most beautiful sight among the forest-trees of old Heidleberg that my eyes ever beheld. I took a small branch, which grew near the ground, the weight of which, when the ice was on it, was forty ounces, and when the ice was melted off, only one ounce, leaving nearly two and a half pounds of ice which was borne by a little shrub, the stem of which was no bigger than a large knitting-needle. What an immense weight must have been on some trees! "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." Psa. cxi, 2.

A HERMIT'S ABODE.

About the middle of April I took a walk through a piece of woods, where, in some places, the snow was still three feet deep, in order to visit a human being, who was said to be a *hermit*, but who, after all that had been stated, seemed to me more like a *ma-*

niac, than one endowed with the faculty of reason. He lived in a small log-cabin, without a chimney, or a window, or even a door. The entrance, which answered the purpose of a door-way, was about two feet square, through which, by stooping low, an ingress and egress was easily made; but O what sights met the vision within this miserable abode! On the left hand, old dry roots of trees and bushes were piled up from one end of the cabin to the other. On the upper part of the heap the hens and chickens made their roost, and beneath the straggling branches the ducks and ducklings made their nests. On the right, knives, forks, spoons, and cooking utensils, served at once the purpose of decoration and convenience. At the end, opposite the entrance, fifteen or eighteen inches below the floor, was a place for the fire, the ends of the planks which constituted the floor answering the purpose of a bench to sit upon, by which means the feet were brought near the fire. Above the fire-place was an opening in the roof which emitted smoke and admitted light, and which thus served the

twofold purpose of a window and a chimney. Some kind friend near by, had furnished the hermit, if I may so call him, with a pile of buckwheat cakes, buttered and sweetened, I suppose, for his breakfast; and with these and some boiled eggs, he seemed to be making a comfortable repast. The poor man was very taciturn, and I fancied I could read on the tablet of his countenance, "crossed in hopeless love." At any rate a sullen gloom sat brooding on his brow; melancholy had marked him for her own, and fell despair of ever seeing better days, deprived him of the comfort of the present. This, to me, seemed to be the case with him; but perhaps I was mistaken. It may have been the case that the roots and rubbish which encumbered his cabin, and the feathered fowl that perched beneath its roof, afforded him more pleasure than abundance of wealth does to some who are of sane mind.

On the 26th of April, the weather being warm and pleasant, I left my friend Lawson's, in Watervleit, and crossed over to the city of Troy; took a leisurely walk through

the place, and proceeded to Lansingburg, thence through Waterford to the Cohoes Falls, and returned, by the way of Mr. Marks's, a brother-in-law of Mr. Lawson, to my lodgings, fourteen miles on foot. My object was to see the country, and take a view of the Falls. There was no prospect of my ever visiting Niagara, so I contented myself with a view of the next best cascade in the great Empire State. "These Falls are seen to great advantage from the bridge across the Mohawk, about a quarter of a mile below. They have a total descent of seventy-eight feet, and a perpendicular pitch of about forty. Above the cataract, the bank on the north has an elevation of nearly one hundred feet, and below one hundred and seventy feet. On the south, above the Falls, the bank is low, but below it the shore is between eighty and ninety feet high. Below the cataract the river runs in a deep rocky and broken bed for a short distance, and then is expanded into a placid pool formed by the State dam, over which it glides in one lovely sheet, of above one-third of a mile in length, whose gentle fall

of seven feet, makes a beautiful contrast to the great cataract above. In time of floods, the whole bed of the river is covered with water, which descends in one unbroken torrent about nine hundred feet wide. At such seasons, the high rocky barriers which confine the stream, the roar of the cataract, the dashing of the troubled waters, give to the scene unusual sublimity. A small manufacturing village is situated near the Falls, on the bank of the Mohawk, within a short distance of the Erie and Champlain canals. The water-power developed here is very great, and the advantages for manufactures are among the best in the State."—*Barber's Hist. Col.*

Another object which I had in view in making this little excursion, was to visit a family in Lansingburg. They came from England in the same vessel with myself and Mr. Davidson. The family consisted of father and mother, four daughters and one son. If I remember correctly, they kept a small tavern in England; but hard times and heavy taxes induced them to seek a better fortune in this western part

of the world. Here, however, either for want of courage, skill, or enterprise, they did not succeed; and after expending about fifteen hundred dollars, without any prospect of doing better in America than in England, they took their farewell of the United States, and embarked for their former home the day I intended to visit them in their new abode.

CHAPTER X.

SCHENECTADY CIRCUIT—SECOND YEAR.

THE General Conference of 1820 met in Baltimore. My colleague, the Rev. Henry Stead, was one of the delegates. He left the circuit the last week in April, and I continued until the latter part of May. It was not in the regular order of things for young preachers on trial to attend the annual conference; yet, as my presiding elder made no objection, I took the liberty to go. The day I left my circuit I traveled forty miles. The weather was fine till about seven o'clock in the evening,—then dark clouds spread themselves on the tops of the Catskill mountains, and by eight o'clock began to pour down torrents of rain upon the plains below, accompanied with awful thunder, and terrible flashes of lightning. The darkness in the intervals seemed to be more dark, by reason of the excessive brightness of the flashes that preceded them, and the bellowing thunder seemed to shake the

earth. I had left Cairo before the storm came on, and hoped to reach my lodgings in time to obtain a shelter from its fury: but I was disappointed. About nine o'clock I missed my way, and for an hour was lost in the woods. At last I discovered a light, and made toward it. But between me and the light there appeared to be a stream of considerable magnitude, as I judged by the noise of the water passing over rapids, or falling over a mill-dam; and the darkness was so dense that I could not tell on which side of the stream the building stood in which the light appeared. Providentially, however, the light was nearer to me than the stream, and the good man of the house kindly put me into the right path, which in a short time brought me to father Trumpore's, in West Camp. I had never been there before, or I might have found the way without difficulty. The family had gone to bed. I had to knock pretty loud at the door, and tell them who I was, and why I came so late at night. The old gentleman got up and let me in, directed me to a room, and bade me good-night. Then

for the first time in my life I slept in a damp bed; for my clothes were so completely saturated with the rain, that I hardly had so much as a dry thread on me. I did not like to give the family trouble at that time of night, or, I dare say, they would have made a fire, and given me a cup of tea, which would have been very acceptable. Taking all things into the account, I think I might have fared better; but, on the whole, I am glad that I did not fare worse.

The next day I crossed the Hudson river, and before sundown arrived at the residence of my friend James Davidson, who was now the professional gardener of Mrs. Montgomery, at Red Hook. Mr. D. lived in a little cottage in the garden, surrounded by fruits, flowers, and vegetables of the choicest kind. The residence of Mrs. Montgomery (now occupied by Madame Livingston) is on the east bank of the far-famed Hudson—as beautiful a situation as could well be selected in any part of York State. During my stay at Red Hook I became acquainted with Mr. Wm. Burnett. He was a countryman of Mr. Davidson, and, for a time, fol-

lowed the same occupation; but has since then been employed in preaching the gospel to the soldiers on Governor's Island, and to the sailors at the Bethel chapel, in Brooklyn. Mr. William Pearne, an Englishman, was in that neighborhood also, at that time, teaching school, since which he and two of his sons have joined the traveling ministry, and one is now a missionary in California. While at Red Hook I preached three times in the school-house to small congregations, gathered together through the influence of the persons just named. The day I left Red Hook I passed through Rhinebeck, Poughkeepsie, and Fishkill, to Philipstown. The next day I preached at Warren's meeting-house in the forenoon, and in the afternoon at Peekskill. I then hastened to New-York with all convenient speed, in order to attend conference. This was the first meeting of the kind I ever attended, being different in many respects from the Conference in England. As before stated, it was not the custom for young preachers, on trial, to have a seat in conference; they did not undergo an examination at the end

of the first, second, third, and fourth years, as they do now. The names of those who had traveled one year were called over by the bishop. The presiding elder represented the case: if there were nothing against them, they were, by a vote of the conference, "continued on trial." Bishop George presided at this conference. A very graphic description of his person and manner is given by Dr. Luckey, in the Methodist Quarterly for 1830. As a presiding officer, my impressions were, that he "sustained the responsibilities of the chair" with proper dignity, and conducted the business with energy, promptitude, and dispatch. In regard to the appointments I have no doubt he acted with a single eye to the glory of God, and the best interests of the Church.

As I was not a member of the conference I took no notes of the proceedings, and therefore cannot describe them. In general, however, I may remark, that the meeting of an annual conference of traveling preachers is a most solemn and impressive season. A hundred, or two hundred ministers of the gospel, assembled together in one place, is

an imposing sight. Being gathered together in the presence of God, of angels, and of men, the first thing is to read a portion of God's holy word, and sing a hymn of praise—either the following, or something equally appropriate:—

"And are we yet alive,
And see each other's face?
Glory and praise to Jesus give,
For his redeeming grace.

"What troubles have we seen!
What conflicts have we past!
Fightings without, and fears within,
Since we assembled last!"

And then a prayer by the bishop, or one of the elders. Then, after fixing the time of meeting and adjournment, appointing committees, &c., the business proceeds in the following order: "What preachers are to be admitted into full connection?" "Who remain on trial?" "Who have died since the last conference?" "Are there any objections to any of our preachers?" In order to ascertain this, each preacher's name is called by the bishop in open conference: the bishop then asks, "Are there

any objections, or is there anything against this brother?" The presiding elder, in whose district the preacher has labored, answers to the question: if there be any objection, the matter is stated, and the preacher is put on his trial; if there be none, the presiding elder, in the absence of the preacher, represents his case, and then his character is passed. Before any one can be admitted into full connection, it is ascertained what are his qualifications. "Has he gifts and grace necessary for the work? Are there any seals to his ministry? What are his attainments in literature?" &c. These are a sample of the questions that are asked and discussed at every conference. Many others come up in the course of the session, as may be seen in the printed minutes every year. On the Sabbath during the conference the deacons and elders are ordained; and at the solemn hour of final adjournment, before the appointments are read out, and before the preachers know to what place they are appointed, in the presence of a large congregation we often hear them sing the following stanzas:—

"And let our bodies part,—
To diff'rent climes repair;
Inseparably join'd in heart
The friends of Jesus are.

"O let us still proceed
In Jesus' work below;
And, foll'wing our triumphant Head,
To further conquests go.

"The vineyard of the Lord
Before his lab'rers lies;
And lo! we see the vast reward
Which waits us in the skies.

"O let our heart and mind
Continually ascend,
That haven of repose to find,
Where all our labors end;

"Where all our toils are o'er,
Our suff'ring and our pain:
Who meet on that eternal shore,
Shall never part again."

CHAPTER XI.

SCHENECTADY CIRCUIT—CONTINUED.

SECOND YEAR.

At the General Conference in 1820, the late Dr. Emory (afterward bishop) was appointed a delegate to the British Conference. He embarked at New-York while the annual conference was in session; and as two of our English friends, with whom I was acquainted, sailed in the same vessel, brother S. D. Ferguson and I went on board to bid them farewell. While we were talking of the voyage, the vessel weighed anchor and sailed down the bay. Sailing in the ship was very pleasant; but returning in the little open boat, amid the surging billows, was frightful. Our conference, which began on the first of June, broke up on the eighth. My colleague and I were re-appointed to Schenectady Circuit. With this arrangement I was well pleased. On my return to the circuit, I rode one day on

horseback from Peekskill to Red Hook, which, including all the crooks and turns of the road, was not far from sixty miles. The thermometer stood at 90° in the shade; and when I arrived at my friend Davidson's pleasant retreat, I was very much overcome with the "burden and heat of the day;" and I well remember that my poor old horse looked very tired also. The next day the thermometer stood at 95°; but I rested among the fruits and flowers, and cooling shades of Mrs. Montgomery's beautiful garden. The day following I rode forty-five miles, the heat still at 90°; but I rested again the day after, and the next day resumed my labors on the circuit. These little items may not seem to be of much account in the estimation of the fathers and pioneers of Methodism, nor do I write them to excite wonder in the rising generation, but merely as pleasant reminiscences of past events.

By the time I had gone once round the circuit this year, I found that the friends were not at all displeased at my reappointment, which to me was matter of great

thankfulness. The following incident, I think, deserves notice: "At our quarterly meeting in Charlestown, it was thought best to admit none but members, unless they had a written permit from one of the preachers. To carry out this rule, two of the brethren, well known in the community, were placed at the door. In keeping this rule one person was excluded. Being refused admittance she was very much offended, and went away in anger. But on reflection, she tried to comfort herself with the thought that a day was coming when it would not be in the power of man to keep her out of heaven, if she were only fit to enter that holy place. But that important *if* stood in the way, and she thought again, '*If* I am only prepared.' On a close examination she feared she was not: conviction, deep and pungent, seized her troubled mind, and ended, as it was believed, in sound conversion. She soon after joined the Church, upon which her husband was very much troubled, and tried hard to turn her away from the faith. But finding he could not do this, he said within himself, 'Per-

haps she is right, and I am wrong;' and so it proved, for before the year rolled round he experienced a change himself, and joined the Church. Thus the Lord works. Sermons are often preached in vain, while an unexpected word or act, which at first, perhaps, 'kindles strife' in the mind, produces in the end abiding peace."

Another little incident occurred about this time, the result of which, to me, was altogether unexpected. At several of our appointments the preaching was in schoolhouses; the congregations were small, and the societies not rich. At one of these appointments the only place of entertainment was at the house of a brother, where, in winter, the preacher and the family had to sit by the same fire. The room was small, and though we were always comfortable in the coldest weather, my studies were often interrupted by the conversation of the wife and the prattling of the little ones. In the summer season I was under no such disadvantage, for the open field I found to be, after a little practice, a much better place for study than the little bed-

room. Necessity, however, is the mother of invention, and we can by a little contrivance sometimes turn it into a virtue. It is the preacher's duty to take care of the lambs of the flock as well as of the sheep. Bearing this in mind, I found at length something to do in the house as well as in the field. At one of my week-day appointments, I put up with a family where was a little boy that attracted my attention. To please him, I gave him a little red book, and said to him, "You must be a good boy; and if the Lord should convert your soul and call you to preach his gospel, you must be a good Methodist preacher." His mother often used to repeat my words to him, and, to my surprise, eighteen or twenty years after I left that circuit, I received a letter from the person, then grown to be a young man, in the western part of New-York, requesting me to give him advice as to what books he should read, and what course of studies he should pursue, the Lord having called him, as he believed, to "give a word of exhortation" to his dying fellow-creatures, on the great and important con-

cerns of eternity. The Scripture says, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

During the summer season this year, I had many a short and gentle ride on pleasant roads, between fields of ripe grain and growing corn on the one hand, and pastures green, or meadows gay, on the other. At that period, and in those parts of the world, there were no locomotives to frighten the cattle, nor clouds of dust to annoy the traveler. Rivers and creeks occasionally intersected the path; mountains and valleys, extensive fields and pleasant groves, painted buildings and improving farms, enlivened the scene. The husbandman toiling in the lots, and the busy housewife spinning at the wheel that which but a little time before was a covering for the sheep, all seemed to say, "This is the country that Heaven delights to bless, and we are the people whom God delights to honor."

In the latter part of July I made a visit

to Schenectady. Brother Samuel (now Doctor) Luckey was the stationed preacher. He kindly introduced me to several friends, with whom I afterward became intimately acquainted. We visited Union College. Dr. Nott being from home, we called on Dr. Macauley, who was then professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, and a very zealous preacher of the gospel. To hear the doctor converse on the wonderful works of God, was a great treat to me; and to see the apparatus by which a number of physical phenomena are illustrated and explained, was as good as a sermon. Perhaps I enjoyed it the more, as it was not my daily task to study these things. It was interesting also to learn, that there was a revival of religion in progress at the time in the city. Mr. Nettleton, I think, was there, laboring with all his might, and with considerable success. The revival was principally among the Presbyterians, and the meetings were conducted on a plan somewhat new. The believers met in one room to pray for an outpouring of the Spirit; and the anxious seekers of religion met in an-

other room in the same building, where they were supplied with a preacher, deacon, or some leading character, to assist and direct them. There seemed to be a general interest felt throughout the city, and an influence which to me at that time was very salutary.

In the month of August I attended a quarterly meeting of *Friends* at Duanesburgh. The meeting-house is large, and it was well filled both in the galleries and below. There were five speakers present; namely, Christopher Ely, J. Bowns, and three others. The two former addressed the numerous audience at considerable length, and with great fluency of speech. I enjoyed the meeting very much, and felt as if a revival had begun among the Friends. A few days before this meeting, I had an appointment to preach at the County-Line Meeting-house, between Florida and Duanesburgh. Just as I was going into the church, an old gentleman desired me to preach from a certain passage of Scripture. He had heard a Universalist on the same text, a short time before, and, as I after-

ward learned, wished to know if a Methodist could preach as well from it as a Universalist. The text was Jer. viii, 22: "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?" &c. A better text he could not have given me, wherewith to disprove the twin doctrines of unconditional and universal salvation. I had much liberty in preaching Christ as the great Physician, able and willing to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him; and in answering the question, "Why, then, is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" The old gentleman appeared to be satisfied with my explanation, and soon after made a profession of religion and joined the Church.

The same day on which I attended the Friends' meeting at Duanesburgh, I had an appointment at a school-house near by. Here also a man wished me to preach from a text which he thought proved the truth of the doctrine of Universalism. The text is 1 Cor. iv, 5, and taken out of its connection with other passages in the same epistle, might seem to favor the one idea so constant-

ly advanced by Universalists; but viewed in connection with the doctrine taught by the same apostle in the second chapter of Romans, and the first of the second epistle to the Thessalonians, warrants no such conclusion. In this second instance, however, I was not as successful as in the first. The querulous critic may have been confounded; but I fear he was neither convinced nor converted. The reason of the different results in the two cases was, I imagine, the difference in the spirit by which the two men were actuated.

CHAPTER XII.

SCHENECTADY CIRCUIT—SECOND YEAR.

A DAY OF PUBLIC BAPTIZING.

During the fall and winter of 1819, there had been a very gracious revival of religion in Huntersland and parts adjacent. We had received a goodly number into society, many of whom had not been baptized. A day was therefore appointed in the month of August, 1820, for the public administration of the ordinance. Twenty-nine persons gave in their names as candidates, and preparations were made for public preaching in a pleasant grove, not far from a beautiful stream of water, in which, if any desired it, they might be immersed in a decent and Christian manner. The weather was remarkably fine in the morning, and perhaps not less than fifteen hundred persons came together from different places to witness the ceremony. The grove, in which we met for public worship, was on the side of a hill near the public road, and gently

sloping toward the south. A carpenter's bench placed beneath the spreading boughs of two venerable trees, whose ample shade was a sufficient protection from the rays of the sun, answered well the purpose of a pulpit for the occasion. The congregation was comfortably seated in front of the speaker. My worthy colleague was the preacher. Three of his children had experienced religion during the revival, and many could rejoice with him on a similar account. During the first prayer his soul was much drawn out in thankfulness, and in ardent supplication for the young converts; and in preaching, I have reason to believe that he faithfully declared the whole counsel of God, as far as the limits of one hour and five minutes would allow. After preaching we all repaired to the water side, where, after singing and prayer, and a word of exhortation, *six* persons were baptized by *sprinkling*, *twelve* by *pouring*, and *eleven* by *immersion*. A gentle shower fell during preaching, which injured no one. A second shower, much more copious than the former, fell during the administration of the ordi-

nance. Some of the congregation retired at the approach of the second shower, but the greater part endured to the end, and were, if I may so speak, literally "baptized in the cloud." If all the candidates could have been satisfied with sprinkling, we might have had the meeting in a barn, and escaped the rain; but the scene would not have been half so imposing, and perhaps the consciences of the *eleven* would not have been answered. In the afternoon another sermon was preached, and the sacrament of the Lord's supper administered to a goodly number of communicants. The next day I had to ride nearly thirty miles to my appointment, and being a little behind my time, I was half inclined to neglect it; but not knowing what evil might follow if I did, I resisted the temptation, and afterward had great reason to be glad that I took up the cross, and went forward. There were more present that day than usual; and perhaps if I had disappointed them, they would not have come another time.

At the time I traveled Schenectady circuit our preaching places were as follows,—

four churches, fourteen school-houses, and eight dwelling-houses. Beside these I had two extra appointments in dwelling-houses, —making in all twenty-eight appointments in four weeks. The four churches were framed buildings, not very large nor very costly,—one of them was unfinished, one very much out of repair, and none of them painted, unless the one at Rensselaerville. The school-houses were comfortable places, and those where we had preaching on Sunday were well filled. The elderly people generally occupied the benches, and the young people the desks behind them, which made a very pretty appearance. On two occasions, when the congregations were thus arranged, circumstances rather amusing took place. On one occasion, where the elderly women occupied the front seat, and the "youngerly" women the desks behind, and above them, about the middle of the sermon the bench on which the elderly women sat broke in the middle, and let my fair hearers all down in a heap. After meeting, at the house where I took tea, a young man reproved his mother for laugh-

ing in time of service "Why, who could help it?" said she: "the dominie himself laughed." In fact I do not know who could avoid it,—a long bench, containing nine women rather above the ordinary size, breaking suddenly in the middle, and letting them all down at once, was rather a ludicrous affair. On another occasion, the weather being very warm, one of my steady hearers fell asleep. At the very moment when all consciousness of what was going on had quite forsaken him, the faithless bench broke in the middle, with so loud a crash that it waked the slumberer, and, before he was aware, brought him to his feet. He sat facing the window. There were no blinds, and the sun shone into the room with unobstructed splendor. The noise of the breaking bench seemed to him like thunder, and the sudden glare of light appeared like lightning. Still unconscious of what was going on he hurried to the door fearing, as he said, that the house was on fire, and that he must make his escape as quickly as he could. The circumstance caused a smile; but, after all,

it was not half so ludicrous as one that occurred some years after in the town of Bedford. The Rev. Mr. Green, a Presbyterian minister, was preaching in a schoolhouse one Sabbath afternoon, during the warm weather. My brother-in-law was present, and his colored man John, who sat on the end of a bench near the door. The sermon was rather too logical for John, and, falling into a deep sleep, he dreamed that he was helping to launch a sloop. Considerable effort seemed necessary to get the vessel started, and John, anxious to show his strength, put, as he thought, his shoulder to the work, and pushed with all his might,—in doing so he fell his whole length upon the floor, to the no small diversion of all the congregation.

A DELIGHTFUL QUARTERLY MEETING.

Our fall quarterly meeting for this year (1820) was held at Rensselaerville, in the month of September. The presiding elder (Rev. E. Smith) was not very well. He had invited the Rev. S. Luckey, stationed at Schenectady, and the Rev. S. Merwin, of

Albany, to pay us a visit on this occasion. These ministers had spent their youthful days in the neighborhood of Rensselaerville, and were well known and highly esteemed in those parts. On Saturday Mr. Luckey preached a capital sermon from the words of St. Peter, 1 Epistle, v, 10; after which Mr. Merwin delivered a charming exhortation. On Sabbath morning, at the love-feast, many were present from different parts of the circuit, and it was a most refreshing time from the presence of the Lord. Probably not less than two hundred persons were present at the administration of the Lord's Supper. At eleven o'clock Mr. Merwin delivered a very eloquent and powerful discourse from John viii, 12: "I am the light of the world." Quarterly meetings in those days were seasons of great good to many people. The farmer would bring six or eight, in his two-horse wagon, from a distance of ten, fifteen, or twenty miles; these, meeting with others from different parts of the circuit, and circuits adjoining, would form a large congregation, and make the meeting very profitable.

CHAPTER XIII.

SCHENECTADY CIRCUIT—SECOND YEAR.

SECOND CAMP-MEETING.

THE day after the quarterly meeting I set out, in company with the presiding elder, for a camp-meeting, in Delaware county, New-York. We traveled the greater part of the first day through a mountainous country. Such a dreary road I had never traveled before; but there was no cause for fear either from wild beast or Indians, which could not be said to be the case with travelers passing that way fifty years before. We stayed all night at a tavern,—not the best in the world, and perhaps not the worst. The next day before noon we arrived at the place of encampment, in the town of Harpersfield. An interesting account of the settlement of this town, by four brothers of the name of Harper, may be seen in Barber's Historical Collection of the State of New-York. The camp-meeting

was held in what is called a "sap-bush,"—a grove of maple-trees from the sap of which sugar is made. The process is very simple. Early in the spring, and sometimes before the snow has left the ground, when the sap begins to rise, the farmers bore a hole through the bark of the tree, into which they fix a tube or spout, which conveys the sap as it runs from the tree into a trough, or pan, placed to catch it. When a sufficient quantity is collected, it is boiled down, skimmed, and crystalized, and made up into small cakes for use. The sirup is almost as sweet as honey, and tastes much better than molasses on buckwheat cakes. The sugar also is very sweet, but not as pleasant as that which is obtained from the cane. The wood of these trees, when grown to their full size, makes as pleasant fuel as any that can be obtained.

In one of these groves—the under-brush and saplings being cleared away, and all the necessary apparatus being provided, and a number of tents erected—we began our camp-meeting, on Thursday afternoon, September 28th, under very favorable cir-

cumstances. A sermon was preached by brother Nathan Rice, of Sullivan circuit, from the words of the prophet Amos, iv, 12: "Prepare to meet thy God." After sermon A. Scholefield and J. D. Moriarty each gave an exhortation. A circle was then formed for prayer, and during the exercise three or four penitents found pardoning mercy, one of whom was a young man from near Newburgh, who had come, as I was told, near one hundred miles, if haply he might find peace to his troubled mind. He found it, and rejoiced with exceeding great joy. At eight o'clock P. M., brother Moriarty preached a very interesting discourse from Jer. viii, 22: "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?" Brother Adams, a local preacher, gave an exhortation after sermon, and then the public exercises were brought to a close; but several of the friends continued their devotions in their tents until a late hour of the night. Early the next morning, after a short and sweet repose, we resumed the hallowed employment of praise and prayer, —first in the tents, and then at the stand.

At ten o'clock the Rev. John Finnegan delivered an encouraging discourse, from Col. iv, 2, on *prayer*, *watchfulness*, and *thanksgiving*. In social conversation father Finnegan was well known to be somewhat humorous and eccentric, but in preaching he was solemn and edifying. The presiding elder followed the morning sermon with an appropriate and powerful exhortation. At two o'clock it fell to my lot to preach. Perhaps it was the sight of so many lofty trees that suggested the following words as suitable for a text: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Rev. ii, 7. Such texts seem very appropriate when preaching in a grove. It might not be amiss to refer to the garden of Eden, where sin entered our world, and to the garden of Gethsemane, where atonement was made for transgressors. After I had delivered my message, brother Scholefield gave a very animated and powerful exhortation, which, it was evident, was attended with the unction of the Holy Spirit to many; for they soon flocked to the pray-

ing circle with streaming eyes and trembling limbs, desiring an interest in the prayers of God's people. Five minutes had scarcely elapsed before one young man found peace. The distress of the penitents then increased greatly, and in less than an hour five more were brought into the liberty of the children of God. At five o'clock brother Adams delivered a practical address from the words of Christ: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." In the evening brother Handy, a local preacher, preached a searching discourse from these words: "If I had not spoken unto them they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin," —which brother Horace Weston applied in a very close exhortation. The usual exercises were continued until a late hour, and then we all retired to rest, except those whose appointed duty it was to keep watch by night. This duty is not very unpleasant at camp-meetings far from the city, where there is no lack of fuel to keep a good fire all night. The way this camp-ground was

illuminated, was by sticking down stakes about four feet in length, making a platform at the top with cross pieces, covering them with earth,—and on the top of this temporary floor placing a sufficient number of pine knots, to make a blaze bright enough to give light all over the ground within the circle of the tents. The watch could easily make a fire large enough to keep them warm,—and by occasionally perambulating around and among the tents keep off all intruders.

On Saturday forenoon brother Scholefield preached an excellent sermon, from 1 John i, 8, 9: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." At two o'clock brother Weston delivered a very encouraging discourse from Isaiah lv, 1. Two praying circles were then immediately formed, and the power of the Lord was present to heal the wounded in a remarkable manner. At these prayer-meetings six or seven persons were converted, and

some backsliders reclaimed. This prevented the five o'clock preaching; but in the evening brother Jesse Pomeroy gave us a good discourse from Col. iii, 4, after which the venerable Doctor Parker made some very profitable remarks, addressed chiefly to believers,—which were followed by a rousing exhortation from brother John Bangs. The good man was then in his element, as he had been all through the meeting, and indeed before the meeting began. Sometimes he was to be seen swinging the ax, cutting down a sapling, helping to raise a tent, fixing the benches, giving directions to the hewers of wood and drawers of water; then after the meeting began he might be heard warning the unruly, comforting the feeble-minded, and with a voice like a lion exhorting sinners to repent, or praying for mourners, with a fervor bordering on enthusiasm. Sabbath morning afforded us still more encouraging prospects. The weather was remarkably fine. The congregation was considerably larger than on the preceding days. At ten o'clock the presiding elder preached a powerful ser-

mon from, "What think ye of Christ?" His arguments in favor of the supreme divinity of Christ were luminous and conclusive, and his exposure of anti-christian errors such as gave no quarter to the popular delusions of the day. At two o'clock it fell to my lot again to speak to the people. The audience was numerous and very attentive, while I endeavored to set before them the solemn realities contained in Rev. xx, 11, 12. After sermon an invitation was given to mourners to come forward, and unite with the people of God in prayer for the blessings of pardon and peace. These exercises had not continued long, before an unconverted man rushed violently in among the worshipers and took his daughter away. Perhaps he thought it would disgrace her to become a Methodist. At five o'clock brother Scholefield again sounded the gospel trumpet. His text was, (Psa. cxix, 136,) "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes because they keep not thy law." His powerful appeals to the judgment and conscience were, one would suppose, irresistible: and certainly they

were not without effect. In the evening brother J. Wait, a local preacher, preached from Psa. cx, 3: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." This was the last sermon; and as it was the last night of our encampment, many of those who felt their unhappy condition when under the sentence of condemnation, availed themselves of the opportunity afforded them of asking an interest in the prayers of God's people; and, blessed be the name of our merciful High Priest, no less than eight found "delivering grace in the distressing hour." The next morning we had a love-feast. It was a good time; and, I have no doubt, will by some be remembered with pleasure through the annals of eternity. In summing up, I believe we came to the conclusion that fifty souls, at least, were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, at this meeting; and many others, by waiting upon God in this means of grace, found their spiritual strength greatly renewed. In the midst of such a glorious war, where the slain of the Lord were so many, and

the sorrows and joys of the multitude were so happily intermingled, the exact number of converts was not so easy to be counted; but in the day of eternity it will probably be said of many, "This man was born there." Several things besides may perhaps be mentioned, for they were very easily ascertained, such as—the kindness of the citizens in Harpersfield to the preachers and friends from a distance—the delightful harmony that prevailed among the laborers in the vineyard—the order and peace of the meeting—the mildness and serenity of the weather, having had a sharp frost before, and a rain-storm soon after, but fine all the time. How many were present during the whole of the meeting I cannot tell,—perhaps three or four thousand; but, blessed be the name of our God, we were neither injured by persecution from without, nor broken to pieces by discord from within. This was the Lord's doing, and to his name be the praise. That season is long past, but the remembrance of it is as vivid as ever. It was the second camp-meeting that I ever attended; and though it had not so

much the charm of novelty as the first, yet there were many other things equally interesting. The public preaching, perhaps, would not rank with that at Niskayunah, —but the prayer-meetings were better attended, and conversions more numerous. But in the recollection of this, as well as of that, there are some things that give to the reminiscence a melancholy hue. Of the fourteen preachers who were present at the second meeting, seven are gone to their eternal home, viz.:—E. Smith, presiding elder; John Bangs, Joseph Bangs, local preachers; H. Weston, J. Finnegan, A. Scholefield, and J. D. Moriarty. With some of these I was intimately acquainted, and esteemed them very highly, not only for their work's sake, but for their ripe experience in the grace of God, and their social and companionable qualities as fellow-laborers in the work of the Lord.

On Sabbath evening, October 8th, being then in the neighborhood of Albany, I went to hear an English Methodist missionary. He was on his way from England to Canada. He had been a missionary in Nova Scotia,

and told us how they formed circuits in that country. When I heard and considered this I could not but admire the Providence that directed my steps to the United States, and did not suffer me to accept of an appointment as a missionary in that rigorous climate. Tuesday, the 10th, I left Albany, and the same evening arrived at the residence of Mrs. Stevenson, in Kinderhook. Mrs. S. was from Yorkshire. She had heard of me as a young preacher from England, and received me with all the heartiness of a Yorkshire Methodist, and all the kindness of a mother in Israel. Years after this, when I traveled the Hudson circuit, I spent many a day and night at her house; and in the season of pumpkin-pies and buckwheat-cakes I well remember that she would take as much pleasure in telling, as I would in hearing, of the mistakes she made in her first attempt to make those good things. In Yorkshire, oat-cakes and apple-pies are common enough; but cakes made of buckwheat, and pies of pumpkins, are not known there. In the season, therefore, Mrs. S. took a right good yellow pumpkin, and cut

it into small pieces, and put the pieces into a crust just as she would apples, and sweetened them well and baked them. "But my pies were not good," said Mrs. S., "and I knew nothing about making them, till I learned of my neighbors. It was just so with buckwheat-cakes. I made them as good as any pound-cake, for aught I knew, and just in the same way, but my cakes were no better than my pies, and I had to learn the art of making them of my neighbors."

CHAPTER XIV.

SCHENECTADY CIRCUIT—SECOND YEAR.

I WAS now on my way to a place in Westchester county, where, while I was traveling on Cortlandt circuit, I had found some very kind friends, to whom I wished to pay a visit, while the weather was mild and pleasant, and traveling good. The climate in this part of the country, it is well known, is very variable, and the changes are sometimes very sudden and very severe. I have never been at the "sunny south," where the sweet-scented magnolia is indigenous to the soil, and the lemon-tree and the orange are as common as the apple and the pear are here. Nor have I ever been as far north as Quebec, where, I am told, the thermometer in winter sometimes stands at thirty-five degrees below zero. My travels have been mostly in the south and eastern part of the State of New-York, with an occasional excursion into the adjoining States of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New-

Jersey: but I have found it to be quite warm enough when the thermometer ranged at from ninety-eight to one hundred, and as cold as I could well endure it, when twenty-one below zero; and between these extremes I have witnessed many "a spell of weather," as the country people express it, as lovely, as calm, as bright, and as beautiful, as I should ever expect to find between the tropics, or in any part of the temperate zones. The sun shines probably with as much brilliancy and splendor here, as in any part of Europe. I have seen sometimes, when I have been traveling, such lofty and magnificent masses of bright cloud, as white as snow, when the whole canopy of heaven, in every other part, was of such a pure, deep, and delicate blue, that it seemed to my imagination a fit abode for holy angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect. At another time, and that not long since, I have noticed the entire firmament beautifully dappled with white fleecy clouds, the pure cerulean shining between with a brightness truly admirable, and the whole apparatus of a gathering storm

moving before the gentle breeze with an indescribable grandeur. I have observed also after a storm, or settled rain, that the north-wester has risen in his might, and swept away all the dark and black clouds, except a few, just before sun-set, on which, if the glorious king of day did but look, he caused them to blush with such gorgeous and glowing tints, as no artist could imitate. In summer, from the tops of the mountains to the depths of the valleys, the earth is covered with a robe of most beautiful colors. The dark green of growing corn just before it begins to blossom, the lighter green of a field of timothy, and still paler hue of a field of oats, contrasted with the yellowish brown of ripened wheat, and the whitened straw of the bearded rye, make a most beautiful appearance. In winter, the earth is often covered with a mantle of purest white. This sometimes falls so softly, so gently, and so uniformly, that it covers every spot evenly and equally, sometimes to the depth of one, and sometimes three feet. Then the wind rises, and sends it across the broad meadows and large fields

to the fence nearest the public road, where, meeting with obstructions, it whirls about in fitful eddies, and curls itself into a thousand fantastic shapes and forms, as if to attract the admiration of the traveler. "Our seasons," says Washington Irving, "are all poetical; the phenomena of our heavens are full of sublimity and beauty. Winter may have its howling winds, and chilling frosts, and whirling snow-storms; but it has also its long intervals of cloudless sunshine, when the snow-clad earth gives redoubled brightness to the day. And then the joyous outbreak of our spring, bursting at once into leaf and blossom, redundant with vegetation and vociferous with life—and the splendors of our summer, its morning voluptuousness and evening glory, its airy palaces of sun-gilt clouds piled up in a deep-azure sky—and the sublime melancholy of our autumn, magnificent in its decay, withering down the pomp and pride of a woodland country, yet reflecting back from its yellow forests the golden serenity of the sky. Surely we may say that in our climate 'the heavens de-

clare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.'"

The special object of my visit to Westchester county was to enter into a matrimonial alliance with one with whom I became acquainted soon after I commenced my labors on the Cortlandt circuit. On the subject of marriage I had read and heard enough, perhaps, to enable me to form a correct judgment. I had noticed, particularly, what Dr. Watts says in that beautiful poem, entitled "Few Happy Matches;" and I believed, most religiously, that in order to render the marriage state a happy one,—

> "Two kindest souls alone must meet."

I believed also, as Cowper expresses it, that

> "The kindest and the happiest pair
> Will find occasion to forbear;
> And something every day they live,
> To pity, and perhaps forgive."

I had noticed also the poet's advice to the ladies, and thought that there was good sense, as well as poetry in it:—

"Misses, the tale that I relate
This lesson seems to carry:
Choose not alone a proper mate,
But proper time to marry."

My youthful days were past. I had left the land of my nativity; and though I was comparatively a stranger in this country, I had formed a favorable opinion of it, and concluded in my own mind that the best way to secure a permanent attachment to its government and institutions, was to marry one who was born and brought up under its fostering wing. On this subject I think I have said enough. But if any wish for more of this kind of discourse, they will find plenty of it in a certain work, called "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife."

The preliminaries being settled, I left my circuit on the 10th of October, 1820, and on the 16th arrived at South Salem, Westchester county, New-York, a little before sundown; and in about two hours after, in the fear of the Lord, and in charity with all men, was married to Belinda, eldest daughter of Justus and Phebe Wilson, of the before-mentioned place, by the Rev. Elijah

Woolsey, an elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Eighteen persons witnessed the ceremony, not one of whom made any objection to the union. Two days after our marriage, we accompanied uncle and aunt Woolsey to one of his appointments, when it was imposed on me to preach. Under such circumstances I could not think of a more suitable text than Matt. vi, 33: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

The Apostle Paul, in one of his epistles to the Corinthians, in giving his advice concerning marriage, says to the single brother, "If thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh." The truth of this last remark has been experienced by many, no doubt. It was so with me. Having married a wife, it was thought best that she should accompany me to my circuit. To this arrangement her parents consented, though it was a trial to them. But I had not spent many days on the circuit, in com-

pany with my "better half," before I received intelligence of the death of my mother. Her last words to me on leaving home were few, and uttered with evident emotion;

"For the heart feels most when the *lips* move not,
And the *eye* speaks the gentle "good-by."

She had often given me a mother's blessing, accompanied with much good counsel; but on this occasion all she said was, "Good-by, my boy; I shall never see you again!" Why she spoke thus at that time, I knew not; but now the mystery was developed. At the news of her death, though I shed tears, I could not sorrow as those who have no hope, for I had good reason to believe that my loss was her eternal gain. It was rather remarkable that my father lived till I was twenty-one years of age, and able to do for myself, and that I did not hear of the death of my mother until I had found a "help meet," and was happily married. "But such shall have trouble in the flesh," says St. Paul; and so it was with me and mine. About the middle of November I left her with some friends in Rensselaerville, and after

filling some appointments in Huntersland, Schoharie, Duanesburgh, Charlestown, Florida, and other parts of the circuit, I attended a meeting on Friday evening, in an old-fashioned school-house in the north part of the town of Berne. The weather was very cold, and the well-meaning people took good care that the house should be well warmed. All this was very kind on their part; but it had well-nigh proved fatal to me, for going out of a crowded school-house, made uncomfortably warm, and riding several miles in an open sleigh facing a keen and frosty night air, I took cold, and the next day was very unwell. On the Sabbath following I preached three times at three different appointments, in the township of Berne; and after the evening meeting rode to the house of Clark Waring, where I expected to meet my wife and elder Stead the next day. In the course of the night I was taken very ill, and the next morning found myself the subject of a violent inflammation of the lungs. My distress, both of body and mind, was very great:—far from the land of my nativity,—my parents dead,—

myself just married, and my wife two hundred miles from the place of her former residence,—to die and be buried among strangers,—to leave my wife a widow in one short month after we were married, were thoughts which revolved in my mind, and brought with them a sadness which I am not able to describe. But the sight of my wife, when she came to the place where I was, relieved me; and for her sake, and in hopes of serving the Church a little longer, I willingly submitted to the lancet, the blister, and the bitter drug. Some persons blamed me for marrying before my two years' probation were up; but for my own part, I have good reason to believe that I should not have survived that fit of sickness if it had not been for the unwearied attention of my wife. Friends were kind, the family at whose house I was taken sick did all they could to make me comfortable, and the doctor was as prompt and attentive as he could be. He bled me in the morning, stayed with me all day, and bled me again at night, and would have done more if he could. But, including that attack and

many others since, I think I may safely say, that, under God, I owe my life, in a great measure, to the kindness and ever-watchful care of my wife.

By the 5th of January I was so far recovered, as to be able to travel a little, but not able to preach. My colleague and friends advised me to rest awhile, during which time we visited my wife's friends at Salem. The sleighing was fine, but the weather was so intensely cold, (thermometer twenty degrees below zero,) that it is a marvelous wonder that I did not meet with a relapse. The first day we traveled from Watervleit, through Albany, and down the river on the ice to Kinderhook. My venerable colleague, who felt for us as a father, provided us with an escort as far as Mrs. Stephenson's, where we rested the first night. Our convoy then left us, and the next day we reached Red Hook, and stopped a day and two nights at Mr. Davidson's. The next night we tarried at Hyde Park, and the next day we traveled forty-five miles, and in the evening, about ten o'clock, arrived at Salem. Our journey was remark-

ably pleasant, though the weather was so extremely cold. We had fine sleighing all the way; but were not sorry when we came to the place where, three months before, we were happily married. Our mutual trials in the interval had been severe. The anxiety of my wife's relations, when they heard of my sickness, was very great; but, through mercy, we were once more permitted to rejoice together in the land of the living.

Having so far recovered my health while I was at Salem, by the middle of February I was able to return with my wife to my circuit; and continued to labor amid all the changes of season, place, and circumstance that occurred, as the Lord enabled me, with various degrees of encouragement and success, until the snow began to melt away, and the frost that bound the rivers and the lakes unloosed its hold on field and flood. It was allowed on all hands, I believe, that this was the hardest winter since the Revolution. The East River, between New-York and Brooklyn, was so obstructed by ice, that boats could

hardly pass from one place to the other; and the North River was closed between New-York and Jersey city, so as to admit carriages of burden to cross on the ice.

In the month of April, I had an interview with a man whose son-in-law died very suddenly a few days before. There was something remarkable in the case of this man. He had been a Methodist, but was an awful backslider. His father-in-law used to remonstrate with him; and on one occasion, when he had been railing against the Methodists, he said to him: "Perhaps I shall see the time when you will be laid on a sick bed, and will be glad to send for a Methodist to pray for you." The son replied, "I would sooner be damned than be a Methodist." Poor man! he had neither the opportunity of becoming a Methodist, nor of having one to pray for him in his dying hour. He went out in the morning in health,—was taken sick in the field, and brought home dead! It is probable, however, that though no one was with him to pray for him, he prayed for himself,

as there were the prints of his knees in the snow.

About the beginning of May I visited some friends in Amsterdam, Montgomery county. I had been there before; but on this occasion I had the pleasure of hearing, at the Presbyterian church, the Rev. Mr. —— preach a sermon on behalf of the society instituted for the purpose of educating pious indigent young men for the ministry. The good old gentleman, whom I took to be a Scotchman, advocated the cause in a very able manner; and, in my opinion, deserved credit for his honesty, inasmuch as he did not hide the peculiarities of his creed, but told the people plainly that *they* were peculiarly bound to render a service unto the Lord, in that place, on such an occasion, seeing they had lately "had such peculiar exhibitions of the amiable sovereignty of God, and of his irresistible grace." And, moreover, he told them plainly, that it was required of the candidates for the ministry that they should faithfully adhere to those distinguishing doctrines of the gospel that were contained

in the "Westminster Confession of Faith." On the sixth of May I tarried all night with a German brother. His father's family at that time, including himself, consisted of *one hundred and forty* living souls.

During the two years that I traveled on Schenectady circuit, I made my home, for a day and a night, every four weeks, at the house of the Rev. William Brown, a local elder, in the town of Berne. Father Brown, as we used to call him, was born in the year of our Lord 1758; entered the army about the beginning of the Revolution, and was soon appointed fife major under General Washington. He experienced religion, I suppose, soon after the war; for he was baptized in 1787, was licensed to preach in 1791, ordained deacon by Bishop Asbury, in 1796, and elder some time after—I think he told me by Bishop M'Kendree. At the time I sojourned with this family, they numbered — including parents, grandparents, children, and grandchildren—forty-five persons. My venerable friend was a little peculiar in some of his notions. His

hair, which was of glossy blackness, was parted in the middle at the top of his head, and was long enough almost to reach to his shoulders. He wore a straight-breasted coat, with a standing-up collar; and in appearance, perhaps, looked as much like Mr. Wesley without his canonicals, as any man in America. Father Brown occupied a farm. The land belonged to the Hon. Stephen Van Rensselaer, of Albany,—but the generous patroon exacted no rent of the occupant, on account of his devotedness to the work of the ministry. Though a local preacher, he had his four weeks' circuit, and attended his appointments regularly on Sabbath. He also attended many funerals: for being well known, and highly esteemed, he was often called upon to perform that kind of service. There were several other local preachers on the circuit; they were all acceptable, but none of them in as great demand as father Brown. His age, his appearance, his standing, and his faithful preaching, rendered him very popular.

The annual conference, at which I was to

be admitted into full connection, or rejected, was drawing nearer and nearer every day. I therefore preached my farewell sermon, first in one place, and then in another, till I had gone for the last time round my circuit. Two years passed away much more rapidly than I had anticipated; and the much-dreaded time came at last. Whoever has read "Memoirs of the Early Life of Cowper, written by himself," and has noticed the affecting description of the horrors he endured the night before he was to appear at the bar of the house of commons, to undergo an examination relative to his qualifications for an office for which he was a candidate, can have some idea of what I suffered the night before conference. How I acquitted myself, in the judgment of the committee, at my examination, I cannot tell. The following venerable persons constituted the committee: Rev. F. Garrettson, N. Bangs, S. Merwin, D. Ostrander, E. Washburn, and William Thacher. Five preachers were to pass the ordeal, viz.: John Bangs, N. Rice, S. D. Ferguson, O. Pier, and G. Coles. We were not permit-

ted to hear each other examined; but were called in one by one. The one examined first might have assisted his brethren, by telling what questions were asked, and how he answered them; but such a course was provided against, by requiring the candidates to take a particular seat in the church during preaching; and hold themselves ready to go before the committee as soon as called for. And well do I know how badly one poor brother (N. R.) seemed to feel, as I came out of the committee room, and announced to him that his time was come. He fetched a deep sigh, and with a groan exclaimed, "O Lord! if I am ever a bishop, I shall never forget this night."

The conference was a time of great peace and harmony among the preachers. Twelve young men were received on trial. Three were ordained deacons; five were ordained elders. Two of the preachers were located, two were returned supernumerary, and five superannuated. This was the year that John Summerfield came over. He had labored three years as a traveling preacher in Ire-

land,—and as, according to the regulations of the Irish Conference, he had but one year more to serve as a probationer, he was received by the New-York Conference as "remaining on trial." He preached once or twice during conference. His appearance was very youthful, but his manner was particularly captivating. His constitution appeared quite feeble,—and perhaps on that account, as well as on account of his remarkable abilities as a preacher, he was stationed in the city of New-York.

In looking over the records of the New-York Conference for the last thirty years, I find that *one hundred* names have disappeared from the printed Minutes. *Seventy* of these have died, *one* has joined the Baptists, *one* the Episcopalians, *three* have left us on account of Church government, or for some other reason; and the rest have either located, been expelled, withdrawn, or been dropped while on probation, and have taken up some other employment. Of those who were elders when I joined the New-York Conference, only ten remain on the Minutes,

—and only five of them are able to do effective service. "Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever?" No; we must all die, and leave the work to others.

Beyond the flight of time,
  Beyond this vale of death,
There surely is some blessed clime
  Where life is not a breath,
Nor life's affection transient fire,
Whose sparks fly upward to expire.

There is a world above,
  Where parting is unknown;
A whole eternity of love,
  Form'd for the good alone:
And faith beholds the dying here
Translated to that happier sphere.

Thus star by star declines,
  Till all are pass'd away,
As morning high and higher shines,
  To pure and perfect day;
Nor sink those stars in empty night,—
They hide themselves in heaven's own light.

MONTGOMERY.

CHAPTER XV.

NEW-WINDSOR CIRCUIT.

At the conference in Troy, 1821, I was appointed to labor on New-Windsor circuit, in company with brother Nicholas White. He was a native of Vermont, had been in the traveling connection a few years, and was highly esteemed by his brethren in the ministry. He was the preacher-in-charge, and in elder's orders; I was the deacon, and was very well content with my lot. It was soon understood by the people that one of their preachers was an Englishman, and the other an American; but which was which they could not tell. At length an elderly lady, at whose house I stopped for a night, asked me the plain question, "Are *you* the Englishman?" I told her I was. "Then," said she, "brother White is the American." "It is even so," said I; "but what of that?" "Why," said she, "my son keeps a store at Goshen; and in conversation one day with some of his customers, the question was

asked, 'How do you like our preachers?' The answer was, 'We like our countryman very well; but we don't like that Englishman as well. He has been brought up under a tyrannical government; and if he thinks to tyrannize over us, it won't answer.'" They supposed that brother White was the Englishman, and that I was the American. The joke was too good to be forgotten; but it made no unpleasant feelings between me and my colleague. We labored in as much harmony as if we had both been born in the same township, and educated in the same school.

New-Windsor circuit, at the time we lived on it, was bounded on the north by Ulster county, on the east by the Hudson river, on the south by Rockland county and the Jersey line, and on the west by the Shawangunk, and other mountains. Two of these mountains were called by the citizens living near them, Mount Adam and Mount Eve; and the thriving little village at the foot of them, was called Edenville.

Our circuit lay mostly within the county of Orange. Why this county was so called,

I can only conjecture. Most likely, as it was organized in 1683, and as York State was then one of the colonies belonging to Great Britain, it was so named in honor of the Prince of Orange. The population in 1647, was twenty-nine men, thirty-one women, and one hundred and forty children. The number of churches in 1846, was as follows: Baptist, nine; Episcopalian, three; Presbyterian, thirteen; Congregational, two; Dutch Reformed, six; Quakers, five; Methodist, twenty-eight. Great changes have taken place in this and the adjacent counties since 1821. The Hudson and Delaware Canal has been opened, and borne on its placid waters millions of tons of that most valuable article which supplies our grates and stoves in the place of wood, which in some parts of the country is becoming both scarce and dear. Perhaps, to a reflecting mind, in nothing does the goodness of God appear more conspicuous, than in providing for the wants of his creatures, centuries before they actually needed it, such abundance of fuel in the bowels of the earth. The world might have existed, and

prospered, and become rich, without either silver or gold; but at this period, what could it have done without iron and coal? "Coal has been used in England nearly six hundred years; and beside the almost incalculable amount used there, England exported, in 1850, over three millions of tons; and during the last thirty years, the single State of Pennsylvania has sent to market twenty-nine millions of tons. Was it by chance that, thousands of years ago, such ample provision was made for the wants of the present generation? Let the atheist answer if he can! The counties of Orange and Rockland are noted, not only for their beautiful hills, granite rocks, and iron ore, but for their rich pastures, "drowned lands," good butter and sweet milk, and another certain article, by which the citizens of New-York cool the Croton water in summer time; and since the opening of the New-York and Erie Railroad, for a rich abundance of that most delicious fruit, called the strawberry. These blessings are now very common; and much credit, no doubt, is due to the enterprise and industry

of man for the bountiful supply: but though "Paul may plant, and Apollos water, God alone giveth the increase."

My field of labor this year included twenty-five appointments; namely, New-Windsor, New-Windsor Landing, Cornwall Landing, Butter Hill, Ketchum Town, The Clove, Monroe, Satterly Town, Chester, Sugar-Loaf, E. Ketchum's, J. Tuttle's, Dutch Hollow, A. Ketchum's, Belvale, Warwick, Postville, Mount Eve, Outlett Bridge, Deer Park, Shawangunk S. H., Bethel M. H., Middletown, Bloomingburg, Washingtonville, and one occasionally at Mr. Oakley's, in the town of Goshen. Four of these were in what we call churches, two of which were unfinished; eight in school-houses; ten in dwelling-houses; and the remainder in such rooms as we could obtain. Since that time the two churches that were not then completed, have been finished; and the circuit has been divided several times, so as to make *six* in the place of *one*, and ample work for *eight* preachers instead of *two*. Goshen and Middletown are now flourishing stations, and the number of Church mem-

bers seems to have increased with the increase of appointments.

My first appointment was on Friday evening, at Washingtonville. At that time there was no church there, or school-house, in which we could have meeting. But we had a good warm-hearted brother there, of the name of Isaac Still, a merchant, who, on the day appointed, and by the time we wanted it, had his shop cleared up and ready for preaching. In that humble tabernacle I have had many good meetings. The first Sabbath on the circuit I preached three times, and met three classes. But it was in the flowery month of June, the weather was warm, the traveling good, and in a part of the country where the natural scenery is most picturesque and delightful. In the forenoon I was at the church in New-Windsor; in the afternoon at a school-house on the hill, near the river, where the view is somewhat romantic. Butter Hill, and its rugged companions, Fort Montgomery and West Point, on the right; Cold Spring and its noted iron-foundries, and St. Anthony's Nose, on the left bank of the river,

are in close proximity to the majestic Hudson; and all these taken together, make the view from that part of New-Windsor where we used to preach on a Sunday afternoon, in summer time transcendently beautiful.

The same day that I preached at New-Windsor in the forenoon, and in the schoolhouse on the hill side, near the landing in the afternoon, I attended a third appointment at six o'clock, in the academy at Cornwall. The building stood on a rising ground, at the foot of Butter Hill, in a very pleasant situation—only it was exposed to the sun from morning to evening, without the shadow of a tree of any kind. The meeting was in an upper room, which, by the time I got there, was so hot that I could hardly endure it.

The next day I had an appointment on Butter Hill,—not on the top, but pretty well up the mountain, where the view of the river and the counties adjacent, on both sides, in a northerly direction, is very extensive. The brother at whose house I preached, lived on a small farm, in a rug-

ged part of the country; but he was a great economist, and lived "within the means." He made his own farming utensils, both of iron and wood, mended his harness, shod his horses himself, and made shoes for his family. His father, who was the class-leader, told me that he had read his Bible through twenty-two times in twenty-one years. On my descent from the mountain appointment, I called on Doctor Elisha Pelham, who was once in the traveling connection, but had located, and was comfortably settled in the town of Cornwall, as a practicing physician of good reputation. The doctor related a number of interesting occurrences that happened to him in his early days. Unfortunately I took no note of them at the time, and the only ones I distinctly recollect are the following:—Somewhere in the State of Pennsylvania, at one of his new appointments, after preaching he called for a class-meeting. An old Dutch farmer tarried with the rest, to hear what was said. Not being accustomed to meet in class, the old gentleman did not expect to be catechised on the

subject of religion. After the preacher had spoken to the others, he asked the stranger what was the state of his mind? "The state of my mind," said he, "is to be a better farmer, to have my fences in good repair," &c. Thus it was evident that where the treasure is, the heart is there also; for as "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and as the old Dutchman's answer was all about worldly things, it was pretty certain that his heart was "brimful of the world." The other incident was this: While the doctor was living near the Delaware river, a company of young people crossed on the ice to celebrate a marriage. When the ceremony was over, the young people, with the bride and bridegroom, attempted to recross; and while on the ice gathered together in a group, to drink the health of the happy pair: in the midst of their mirth the treacherous ice gave way, and the whole company perished in the chilling stream. All these might have been saved but for that bane of human society—ardent spirits!

The venerable doctor, after entertaining

me kindly at his house, went with me to the next appointment. This was at Sackettstown, where I found a large and flourishing class of lively, zealous Methodists. One of the members was the mother of Paul R. Brown. The son had not then begun to preach; but in seven years afterward was, and still remains, a member of the New-York Conference. My next appointment was in The Clove, where our friends had just begun to build a meeting-house, toward the erection of which a member of the society of Friends contributed two hundred and fifty dollars. From The Clove I proceeded to the next preaching place, in the town of Monroe, which is now the head of a circuit. Journeying onward, I proceeded from place to place, till I had compassed the whole circuit. In the town of Sugar Loaf I met with a colored man named William Seymour. His experience was rather remarkable. When he was converted, the change in his feelings was so great that he actually went and stood before the glass to see if the change in his mind had not produced a corresponding one

in his body. He knew very well that "the Ethiopian cannot change his skin;" but he felt so well within, that he thought perhaps the good Lord had given him a white skin as well as a new heart, and he looked in the mirror to see if it were so. It was not as he expected; but the disappointment made no difference in his mind with regard to the work of the Spirit on his heart. I was greatly delighted with the company of William, as long as I knew him; and have good reason to believe that he is gone to that heaven about which it was his delight to hear, and talk, and sing. He professed to enjoy the blessing of perfect love; and I have no reason to think that he was deceived or mistaken in that particular. In the little village of Sugar Loaf—so called on account of its being in the immediate neighborhood of a mountain of that name—lived at that time the venerable Zalmon Lyon, a superannuated preacher in the New-York Conference. He was a man of an excellent spirit, much beloved by his intimate friends, and universally respected by all who knew him. In that quiet abode he

finished his days in peace, some years after I left the circuit. Sugar Loaf now is the head of a circuit; the old church, in which my colleague and I used to preach, has been taken down, and a new one, of larger dimensions, erected in its place.

At Belvale, not far from Sugar Loaf, lived a Mr. Ananias Wilson, cousin to my wife. The agricultural society of Orange county awarded to him a premium for the best improved farm in the county. We used to preach at his house in the winter season, and in his barn in the summer. The old gentleman and his wife died a few years since; but their son Samuel, who is a class-leader, occupies the same farm, and lives in the same house where his parents resided.

The stewards on New-Windsor circuit had hired a house, which was thought to be large enough for two families; but it was judged best that one of the preachers should live upon one part of the circuit, and the other on the other. It was some months before we could find another house; but it was just as well, for it gave my wife an oppor-

tunity of spending another summer at home with her parents, and me an opportunity of crossing the river and the mountains, and seeing a little more of the country than I otherwise should have done. In consequence of this arrangement, we did not get settled in our new home until some time in the month of December. We lived in a wealthy neighborhood; the farmers supplied us with plenty of firewood, and grain for my horse,—and they and their wives made us a handsome donation of good things necessary for the table, and a little money for the purchase of clothing, if necessary. At the end of the year, when I came to reckon up my accounts, I found myself free of debt, with funds enough on hand—which has not been always the case since—to take me and mine to the next circuit.

The donation visit was the first of the kind I had ever witnessed. It was at the house of Mr. William Wisner, in Belvale, where we then lived. Sister Wisner took great interest in the affair, and our colored friend, William Seymour, kindly assisted on the occasion. He was a professed cook,

and knew well how to make good things for the table. The ladies in the neighborhood honored us with their presence and aid; and the gentlemen were not wanting, on their part, in providing the more substantial elements for the visit; so that, on the whole, it was a cheerful meeting. It was certainly pleasant, on our part, to receive such attentions from the people, and if, as the Saviour has said, "It is more blessed to *give* than to *receive*," I have no doubt but the donors will have their reward. I might mention many other persons who lived on the circuit, and many pleasing circumstances which took place that year; but I have not room to insert all that I could wish. The limits of my book require me to be brief, and I must pass on to describe another field of labor.

CHAPTER XVI.

HUDSON CIRCUIT—FIRST YEAR

My next appointment was Hudson circuit, in the county of Columbia, and on Rhinebeck district. This section of the work formerly belonged to Chatham circuit; but it was thought best, at the close of the preceding conference year, to take off as many appointments with the city of Hudson as would make a two weeks' circuit, and furnish support for one preacher. The official board did not know but they might get a single man, and therefore made no provision for a family. But unmarried men in the traveling connection were scarce then, as well as now, and it was my lot to run the risk of pleasing the people, and of obtaining a comfortable support. Accordingly I was sent there as preacher in charge to do the best I could. I was to preach three times in the city, two Sabbaths in the month, and twice on the intervening Sabbaths, and once in the country. The regu-

lar appointments connected with Hudson, were Columbiaville, Kinderhook Landing, the Valitie, Claverick, and Hillsdale. But I frequently made other appointments in different places as I had opportunity, and as the people desired it.

The city of Hudson, as to its topography, has not undergone many changes within the last thirty years; and whoever sees it as it is now, will see but little alteration since I was first stationed there in 1822. The main street is nearly a mile in length. It commences near the river, and terminates at the foot of Prospect Hill Two other streets run parallel with Main-street, and these are intersected by cross streets, numbered from one to eight. At the foot of Main-street a promontory juts out into the river. On each side of this rocky point are two spacious bays, which are now crossed by the Hudson River Railroad. The soil in and about Hudson, is a cold, blue clay, which in summer is as dry and as hard almost as a brick; but after a heavy rain, or the melting of a heavy body of snow, or the breaking up of winter, the mud is dreadful

beyond any place I ever was in. On one occasion, when I was making pastoral visits, I had on a pair of India rubbers. They were rather too big and loose by reason of age; and fearing I might lose them, I fastened them on with strings. But, alas! in having to step across a place more muddy than common, and there being no such kind of "foot-prints" as Old Humphrey speaks of in one of his essays, I sunk so deep in the mud that, in trying to extricate myself, the strings of my sandals broke, and I left my overshoes in the miry clay, a legacy to the city of Hudson. But this was not the worst evil I had to encounter. The principal streets were paved, and some of the others were made passable with boards and planks; but the lanes and alleys were free from all such encumbrances, and as the entrance to the barns and stables was through the alleys, to get to them in muddy seasons was about as bad as for John Bunyan's poor Pilgrim to get through the Slough of Despond. But though the natural soil is barren, yet, when well manured and properly worked, the earth repays the

tiller's toil with as rich grass and good grain as some parts of Long Island; and better plums and sweeter grapes are not to be found in Westchester county, or on Croton Point. The surface of the ground on which the city is built, is the most uneven of any place I ever saw, except, perhaps, Sing Sing and Peekskill. The "city fathers" must have been wofully wanting in sagacity or enterprise, or they might have made the place where Hudson now stands, one of the handsomest sites for a city in the State. By leveling the hills and filling up the gulleys, and fetching gravel or sand from Prospect Hill, and laying out the city in streets and squares, a most beautiful platform might have been secured, and one of the prettiest places between New-York and Troy would have perpetuated their name to the latest periods of time. But as they did not do it, I shall not trouble myself to inquire when the city was built, or by whom it was founded. The first time I saw it was in 1822, and the last in 1852, and between these two periods of time very little improvement has been made. Per-

haps the next generation will do better. The number of churches and meeting-houses in Hudson, in 1822, was six; namely, one Methodist, one Episcopalian, one Baptist, one Presbyterian, one Universalist, and one for Friends. The Dutch Reformed and Catholic churches, and one for the Orthodox Friends, have been built since. The old Court-house stood where the Presbyterian church now stands; and what is now the Temperance-hall, was the old jail. The present Methodist church was built in 1825. The old meeting-house, which was a one-story building, without any gallery, stood where the parsonage-house now stands. There was no parsonage, nor any house provided for the preacher's family, when I first went there. My predecessor, who was a single young man, was one of the three preachers on Chatham circuit, and boarded part of the time in Hudson, and part of the time in the country. When he gave me the plan of the circuit, he mentioned the names of several friends in Hudson, on whom we might call, and perhaps obtain lodgings until a house was provided. Two of these

friends wished to be excused, as it was not convenient to receive company. In the third case we succeeded better. The good lady of the house (Mrs. M'Lean) received us kindly, and took care of us until our furniture arrived, and two comfortable rooms were hired, in Deacon Whiting's house, for our accommodation. The deacon belonged to the Baptist Church: his wife was a Methodist: so they agreed to differ. But as they had no little children, there was no dispute between them about the propriety or impropriety of infant sprinkling. The deacon was firm in the faith of the Church to which he belonged. He certainly was not rigid in his views of doctrine; or if he were so in his private opinion, he was the least disposed to contend for those peculiarities of any one of his faith and order with whom I was acquainted. He died some years after I left the city. His widow survived him till the year 1848, when I was stationed in that city again. She then, after a short illness, left this world in hope of a better; and it was my lot to perform the funeral services at her grave.

The ministers settled in Hudson in 1822, were the Rev. Mr. Stanton, of the Presbyterian Church; and the Rev. Cyrus Stebbins, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, who was formerly a Methodist, but probably, like many others in that day, found that our system of finance did not afford him a sufficient support. The Rev. Howard Malcom was the pastor of the Baptist Church; and though rigid in his views of doctine, was remarkably friendly, and more than once exchanged pulpit services with me. Mr. Pickering, of the Universalist Church, had recently resigned his charge. He had been very zealous in the propagation of his doctrines, and had had some controversy with Dr. Amos Carpenter, a Quaker preacher, on the points in dispute. Perhaps it was these facts, which were quite rife when I first went to Hudson, that induced a young man, named Truesdale, soon after my arrival, to request me to preach a sermon on "The unpardonable sin." I did not fully comprehend his ultimate design, and unwittingly complied with his request. The sermon was preached, and very soon after

I was requested to furnish a copy for publication.

"'Tis pleasing, sure, to see one's name in print;
A book's a book, although there's nothing in't."

The young man who wished me to preach the sermon, was willing to print it, and trust for his pay. The sermon was accordingly published, and a sufficient number sold to pay for the printing. Mr. Leverett, a Universalist, answered it, in an elaborate discourse, full of burlesque, ridicule, and sarcasm. This brought on a rejoinder, which put an end to the controversy.

On some accounts I found Hudson to be a pleasant appointment. A small circuit was connected with the station; and as I lived in the city, and kept a horse and carriage, I enjoyed some of the luxuries of both town and country; and though in winter I had some cold rides in the latter, I had warm friends in both. In the city I realized the advantages of a station, and in the country those of a circuit. During my two years' stay I was visited by Bishop George, father Garrettson, and elders Stead,

Hibbard, Rice, Youngs, and Ross, and several brethren who were younger in the ministry, to all of whose instructions and conversation I listened with great delight. If I met with some things in the city which were not pleasing, I could harness up my horse and wagon, and with my wife and child take a ride into the country, and spend a day or two at a time with a friend at whose house we were always welcome. In the city I found an excellent counselor in father Burchstead, a true friend in brother Rich, and a zealous fellow-laborer in the prayer-meetings in Stephen R. Kirby, who is now a practicing physician in New-York. But our most sympathizing friend in the city was Stephen Monroe, whose aid in things temporal and spiritual was not more needed than it was readily and cheerfully given. But perhaps there were few whose friendship was more firm and unvarying than that of Rufus Clark. He was a plain farmer, not in very affluent circumstances; but a more honest, faithful, generous circuit steward I have seldom known.

The natural scenery round about Hud-

son, and at some particular points on the circuit, is magnificent. At the upper part of the city, and about a mile east of the river, is a beautiful elevation of land called Prospect Hill, on the top of which is a cluster of cedars, wanting only something more in age and size to remind one of Lebanon; but the hill is, perhaps, in some other respects, more like the Mount of Olives than Lebanon. It lies east of the city,—and as the traveler comes in from that quarter, and arrives at the summit of the hill, all at once the city lies spread out before him. The impression of a probable similarity between the entrance into the two places—Jerusalem and Hudson—and the moral character of the people of both cities, was so great on my mind, that after I had finished my two years' labors there, on revisiting the place, as I came into the city from the east, the words of the evangelist (Luke xix, 41, 42) were so strongly revived in my mind, that I felt as if I must preach from them, although I had done so once before, in the regular course of my ministry.

On the east side of Prospect Hill lies the city burying-ground. It was small in 1822, but is now much enlarged and improved in appearance. Indeed it is a very neat place, tastefully laid out, and ornamented with cedar and pine-trees, which retain their verdure all the year. Amid these thrifty evergreens, a profusion of white grave-stones and marble monuments tell where the young and beautiful, the aged and the wise, are laid in their last earthly home. During the first two years that I lived in Hudson, if I remember correctly, I attended but one funeral; in the course of the second two years, thirty-seven, twenty of whom were adults.

About the middle of October, 1822, I accepted an invitation to take up a new appointment on the turnpike, leading from Hudson to Hillsdale, about three miles west of Parley Foster's. A gentleman named Reed had opened a store at that place. Mrs. Reed had been a worthy member of the Church at Hillsdale, and felt as if something ought to be done for the neighborhood where she had come to reside.

There was no school-house near by, and the house occupied by Mrs. Reed's family was too small for a place of meeting; but the keeper of the tavern (Mr. Sturges) offered us the use of his largest room. At first but few attended; but through the zeal of sister Reed, who went from house to house, and invited her neighbors to attend, the congregation soon increased. Great attention was paid to the word; and from what followed, I have great reason to believe that it fell into good and honest hearts. I did not see any immediate fruit of my labors in the conversion of souls; but my successor (the Rev. Timothy Benedict) had not spent many weeks on the circuit before a gracious revival of religion broke out in that neighborhood. In one family twelve or thirteen were numbered among the happy converts; and three or four in Mr. Reed's family, one of whom, Henry W., is now (1852) a presiding elder in Iowa conference, and a delegate to the General Conference in Boston this year. A little before the revival commenced Mr. Reed built him a new house; and in compliance

with the wishes of his wife made a chapel of the upper room. Seven months after I left the circuit I made a visit to that place; and had the honor and pleasure of preaching to about thirty young converts in that same upper room, which had been consecrated by the piety and prayers of our worthy sister Reed, to the noble purpose of giving her neighbors an opportunity of hearing the gospel, and of worshiping God in spirit and in truth. May Heaven reward her for her work of faith, and labor of love.

As I kept a horse and carriage, I had the privilege of attending a number of camp-meetings, at different places, while I was on the Hudson circuit. The first was in the fall of 1822; it was at Hillsdale, near Parley Foster's. I think it was at this camp-meeting that the late Richard E. Schermerhorn experienced religion, of whom such an excellent account is given in our Minutes for 1836. At any rate, I well remember seeing him there, and rejoicing with him in the goodness of the Lord. The next was at Greenfield, near Saratoga Springs, about seventy miles from Hudson. One of the

tract distributers accompanied me to that meeting. Our Tract Society had not long been in existence; and in order to distribute the tracts as rapidly and extensively as possible, we adopted the colporteur plan,—took a box of tracts and books with us, and sold them to all who were disposed to buy. Being strangers to the road, we missed our way once or twice. Rain fell in abundance; and in ascending a steep hill, which was very slippery, my horse fell and broke the shaft of the wagon. We then dragged along as well as we could till we came to a blacksmith's shop and a tavern, where we repaired damages, baited the horse and ourselves, and stayed all night. The next morning the weather was as fine as it could well be, after a plentiful shower. The roads were not in the best condition for traveling; but with a clear sky and a pure air we got along very well, and soon arrived at the camp-ground. The meeting had already commenced; but we had not been there long before we found friends who kindly invited us to their tent, where we found a pleasant home till the

close of the meeting. My friend soon opened his box of books and tracts; and in a short time sold ten or twelve dollars' worth of those short and "silent lectures," which in many instances have proved of "sovereign power." The potency of the press, was, perhaps, never better expressed than in the following "sentiment," offered at the Printers' Festival in New-York, Jan. 16, 1852:—"*The Pulpit.*—It finds in the illimitable dissemination of its teachings by the *press*, a gift of tongues more potent than that of the apostles on the day of Pentecost." A sermon is preached to five hundred people; in a few days it is printed and read, perhaps, by five thousand persons; and in an increased ratio from year to year. This was the case with Mr. Charles Wesley's famous sermon, on "Awake, thou that sleepest." Eph. v, 14.

Our meeting continued over the Sabbath, and broke up on Monday morning. The intervals of time between public preaching were filled up with prayer, singing, reading, and religious conversation. Many sinners were deeply convinced of sin, some were

converted, some were reclaimed, and a few professed to be made perfect in love. On our return from the camp-meeting we tarried all night with my much esteemed friends, Isaac Lawson's family, at Watervleit, where I found that fifteen months' absence had not cooled the warmth of affection that had manifested itself in numberless acts of kindness during the two years that I was on the Schenectady circuit. By the time that I got home again my horse was sick, and soon after died. How to get another I did not know, as I had not the money; but Providence opened the way, and in a few weeks I was equipped again, and better than before.

On the Sabbath after my return from the camp-meeting I preached three times in Hudson, met two classes, and baptized three persons by immersion in the river. In the evening, after preaching, we continued our prayer-meeting till a late hour. Four persons came forward to be prayed for; and on their account we appointed prayer-meetings on week evenings. Soon after this a few experienced religion, one

of whom I found nearly thirty years after still in the way that leads to Zion. The others are either dead or gone to live in some other parts of the world.

Some time in the month of October, I made a visit to our friend David Wager, a local preacher in the town of Ghent, and preached to his family, fourteen in number, and to a few others, from the words of Christ to Martha: "One thing is needful." After preaching, brother Wager proposed a subscription, heading it with five dollars himself, to aid me in purchasing another horse, in the place of the one that died on my hands. By the middle of December the necessary amount, within a few dollars, was generously subscribed by the friends on the circuit, and I was then enabled to go from place to place without being dependent on others. On the 29th of that month, I was called on to preach a funeral sermon on occasion of the death of one of the young members of the class at Columbiaville; namely, *John Vosburg Staats*, a lovely youth, fifteen years of age, of amiable disposition, sincere piety, and circumspect walk. He

was one of our most valuable juvenile members, and was greatly beloved. His death was deeply lamented by a numerous circle of relatives, friends, and neighbors, both young and old. Happy will it be for them if they shall meet him in heaven. On the 11th and 12th of January, 1823, we had a quarterly meeting at Hudson. Our church was too small to accommodate a large audience; but the Universalists generously offered the use of theirs, which was thankfully accepted. We had an excellent time, both at love-feast and sacrament, and also during the public preaching, both morning and evening.

When I had finished my first year on Hudson circuit, I found that I had preached one hundred and three times in the city, and one hundred and twenty-three in the country, and had traveled between two and three thousand miles. Received $188 quarterage, and $67 toward a horse. Baptized fourteen infants by sprinkling, and nine adults by immersion, and married seven couple for the moderate sum of $14. My health in general was good, but I fell into

some errors, which it took me some time to correct. In my own opinion, so it appears to me on reflection, my preaching was too controversial, and I was in the habit of speaking too rapidly, as well as "too long and too loud." The people, notwithstanding, were very kind; and through mercy, I went to the conference free of debt, and without a word of complaint from any one.

CHAPTER XVII.

HUDSON CIRCUIT—SECOND YEAR.

Our annual conference for 1823, met in the Methodist Episcopal Church, May 28th, at Balston East Line, Saratoga county, New-York. At this conference thirteen preachers were received on trial; nine were ordained deacons; and five were ordained elders, of whom I was one. The following sixteen delegates to the General Conference were elected, namely: F. Garrettson, S. Merwin, N. Bangs, E. Smith, D. Ostrander, E. Washburn, P. P. Sandford, J. B. Stratten, H. Stead, M. Richardson, S. Martindale, S. Luckey, A. Scholefield, L. Clark, P. Rice, and William Ross. The sittings, deliberations, and acts of the conference, were attended with peace and harmony. The religious exercises on week-days were thinly attended; but on Sabbath, numbers, from far and near, flocked to hear the word of life.

At the conference a year before, a vote was passed, requesting Bishop George to

preach a sermon on the Witness of the Spirit; Dr. Bangs, on Christian Perfection; and the Rev. S. Merwin, on Justification by Faith. The request was complied with; but from some cause or other, I know not what, their sermons were never published. Perhaps they were not written, as it was not the practice with our ministers in those days to write and read their discourses. Dr. Phœbus preached the sermon at the ordination of elders, on Sunday afternoon. His text was John x, 9: "I am the door." I thought his preaching was too metaphysical to be remembered; but in the course of his sermon he showed the importance of personal piety in a minister, in a very solemn, impressive, and striking manner.

This year (1823) I attended *five* camp-meetings. The first was at Petersburgh, Rensselaer county, New-York, not far from Vermont. On my way thither, while on board a sloop going from Hudson to Albany, I narrowly escaped a very serious accident. I was sitting with a number of gentlemen on the quarter-deck, and while the sloop was tacking about, the captain sung out,

"Take care; look out for the boom." Happily for me, I heard what he said, and observed it. But the gentleman who sat next to me either did not hear, or did not mind. The boom struck him on the head, and he fell into the river. Fortunately for him he could swim; but as I could not, if it had been me I might have been drowned, for it was some time before a boat could be lowered, and rowed to him to render him any assistance. Our camp-meeting was not very numerously attended; but we had a very comfortable time, and I trust good was done. On our return, my presiding elder, the Rev. Henry Stead, and his son William, and I called on the late venerable Billy Hibbard, and stopped one night at his house. The old gentleman was as full of good humor as ever, and related to us many of those amusing anecdotes which he afterward published in his memoir. In his dealings with mankind, he said he had found it advantageous to have two heaps—one for *unaccountables*, the other for *incurables;* and if he met with any person that he could not get along with, he always found a place for

him in one or other of those heaps. I thought the idea was a good one, and have sometimes acted upon it, in my intercourse with such delinquents as were *unaccountably* perverse, or *incurably* bad.

The next camp-meeting I attended was at Croton, on "the old battle-ground," as the veterans call it. The ground, I have been informed, belonged to the late General Philip Van Cortlandt, who not only gave the Methodists the use of it, but with his family attended the meetings. The meeting at which I was present, was numerously attended. About thirty traveling preachers were present on that occasion. The late Ezekiel Cooper was there, and preached a sermon long to be remembered. His text was Heb. ii, 3, 4. He was a great reasoner, and took plenty of time to show his hearers that those who rejected the gospel had no reasonable excuse for so doing. Rev. Joseph Rusling was there also, and gave such an exhortation one evening as I had never heard before.

From the 8th to the 13th of September, I attended a camp-meeting at Turkey Hills,

in Connecticut: Lewis Pease, Samuel Luckey, and James Youngs, were there, and seemed to preach with unusual freedom and energy; and I should think, from what I saw and heard, that great good was done at that meeting. From the 15th to the 20th, I attended a camp-meeting at Stillwater, in Saratoga county, at which about fifty persons professed to experience religion, and about twenty-five to be renewed in perfect love. On the 29th I attended a very pleasant little camp-meeting at Green River, near Hillsdale, in Columbia county, New-York. Snow fell the day before; but during the meeting we suffered no inconvenience from the coldness of the weather. There was plenty of wood, and we kept large fires burning all night, and the sun shone brightly and warm by day. We were far enough from cities and sea-port towns to escape the rabble and the rowdies who sometimes disturb the worshipers in other places. The surface of the ground was unusually rough; but before the meeting was over, it appeared smooth enough. This was the third meeting of the kind on Rhinebeck district that

year. My old colleague and worthy friend, the Rev. Henry Stead, presided, and seemed to enjoy the meeting about as well as any one present.

As near as I can recollect, one of the veterans of the cross, at the closing exercises on Saturday morning, spoke as follows: "When I was a young man I went to New-York to lay in a stock of merchandise. At the place where I boarded, the landlady one day was finding fault with her hired girl for spending so much time at the Methodist meetings. 'The Methodist meeting!' said I; 'what kind of meeting is that?' She then gave me to understand that her girl was a Methodist, and attended meetings in the old John-street church. I had never seen a Methodist before, and wished to know if I could go to their meeting. Being told that there would be preaching on Friday evening, I went, and heard such singing and praying as I never heard before. While the minister was praying, it seemed as if there was a *conduit* between him and his Maker, and that he could talk with him as a man talks with his friend. And then he

kneeled down when he prayed, and he preached without notes, which I had never seen done before. And at the close of his discourse, he gave out an appointment for another preacher to preach the next week. '*Another*,' said I to myself; 'why, I thought that there was not another in the world!' But I stayed and heard the other; and at last gave up my business in the country, settled in New-York, experienced religion, and joined the Methodists. And I had not met in class much more than a year, before the preacher gave me a class-paper, and told me I must be the leader of the class: I objected, but he would hear no objections. Not long after he said something to the class about giving me license to exhort: I told them I wanted no such thing; but the preacher prevailed on me to take it, and told me how to go to work. Some time after this, at a quarterly conference, the preacher wished me to retire a little while. I did so; and when I came into the room again, he told me the brethren had voted me a license to preach. I told them I should not take it. But they prevailed on me to

accept of it, and to do the best I could. At last I consented; and it was not a great while before the brethren of that quarterly conference passed another vote, recommending me to travel. So I was pushed along from one thing to another, till at last I found myself one of the number of the traveling preachers." The preacher having finished his narrative, I inquired who he was, and found that he was the same man whose case is mentioned in a little book, called "The Supernumerary; or, Lights and Shadows of Itinerancy," pp. 86, 90. His name was "Sweet."* It appears from Dr. Bangs's History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that he joined the New-York Conference in the year 1801, and that he located in the year 1808, most probably for want of support; for, according to the statement in father Woolsey's narrative, when he was on the Black River circuit, although "he had a wife and seven children at home, and had left them with only half a bushel of potatoes, and neither bread nor meat in

* In the Minutes, his name is printed Griffin Sweet.

the house, when he came to the quarterly meeting to receive his quarterage, *fifty cents* was all that was coming to him." Times must have greatly changed since the days of Samuel the prophet; for then, in case of extreme want, a man would say, "Put me, I pray thee, *into* one of the priests' offices, that I may eat a piece of bread." 1 Sam. ii, 36. But in modern times, the case has been so sadly reversed, that some of our best preachers have left the sacred office, and betaken themselves to some secular employment, in order to obtain bread for their families.

The camp-meeting at Green River was the *fifth* that I attended that year; and I think I may say that at all of them I found my spiritual strength renewed. At that time I was decidedly of opinion that God had given to the Methodists a power and a privilege in regard to camp-meetings which no other people upon the face of the earth ever enjoyed; and that under prudent regulations, those means of grace, above all others, might subserve the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. The genius of

Methodism seems to be one that can adapt itself at all times, and under all circumstances, to all persons and places, with nearly equal facility. It is something like the green grass, which, though it is trodden under-foot by man and beast, flourishes in almost all countries wherever it can get a foothold; and unless choked with noxious weeds, or destroyed by some other accident, may yet overspread a great part of the habitable earth.

To spend so much time in traveling and attending camp-meetings as I did this season, might seem to leave but little for study; and yet I find by *memoranda* kept at the time, that in the course of six months —from May to October—I read and took notes of the following works:—

1. Preachers' Experience,—a book published at our Book Concern.

2. Bishop Porteus's Lectures on the Gospel of St. Matthew.

3. Doctor Chalmers's Discourses to Commercial Men.

4. Germs of Thought, by Rev. Thomas Wood.

5. Foster's Essays—on Decision of Character, Popular Ignorance, &c.

6. Watson's Observations on Southey's Life of Wesley.

7. Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature.

8. Erastus Brown's Trial of Cain—an original work.

9. Memoirs of the Life of Rev. Joseph Benson, by James M'Donald.

The last-mentioned work I felt a more anxious desire to see than any that had lately issued from the press; and was not greatly disappointed in the perusal, except perhaps that there appeared a great discrepancy between the two parts of the work,—that written by Mr. Benson himself, and that written by his biographer. Mr. M'Donald seems to have labored to say all he could in praise of his friend,—all which was well enough if it had been delivered as a eulogy; but Mr. Benson's own diary, I think, gives the justest and best view of his character. Biographers, in general, are apt to extol their heroes and heroines too much. A certain writer, speaking of Mrs. Hemans, says, "Her mind

was as pure as an angel's;" and another, speaking of the humility of a great man, lately deceased, says: "There was an overshadowing element of majesty in his character, like the overshadowing presence of the cloud and flame on Sinai, that turned all its earthy rocks into sapphire."

On the 15th of November I married a couple, in the evening, at Hillsdale. It was not my intention to return to Hudson that night; but after the ceremony was over, something within seemed to say,—"Your work is done,—now you had better go home." I obeyed the inward monitor, though the weather was cold, and the distance was fifteen miles; and so it was, that just as I had put my horse into the stable, and fastened the door, the cry of "*fire*" was heard in every street of the city. In about three hours several houses and some other buildings, not far from our dwelling, were reduced to ashes. The city was in great danger, the inhabitants were much alarmed; but through mercy the devouring element was arrested, and by morning light the city was saved.

In the month of February, 1824, after preaching in a private house in Hillsdale, I went home with Mr. Rosman's family to their beautiful residence in the township of Claverack; and stayed with them one day and two nights, during a most tremendous gale, which blew down a great many buildings, in different places. Several families of the same name lived in the same neighborhood, —one was a Lutheran, one a Presbyterian, and another a Baptist. But though none of them were members of our Church, they all showed me very great respect; and one of the families wished me to baptize their infant daughter, a sweet little cherub, three months' old—now (1852) a wealthy farmer's wife, and the mother of several little cherubs, as beautiful as herself. While on this visit, the venerable grandsire told me that his grandparents came from Germany. When they embarked for America they had only one child to comfort them—a son; and he died on the passage, and was buried in the ocean. His father wept bitterly at his loss, fearing that there would be no one to keep up his name in America.

He was one of those German emigrants who pitched their tents in East-Camp. The event proved that the good man's fears were groundless. The Rosmans are very numerous at this day.

The period for bidding farewell to my friends on Hudson circuit having arrived, I endeavored, in every place, to "commend them to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified." At the Valitie* I preached for the last time, from Isa. lxii, 1: "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." The meeting was in the evening. We occupied an upper room in the Village Hall. The room was lighted with three lamps,—one of which, while I

* Valitie, unless I am misinformed, signifies Little Falls. It was a small place in 1824, but is now "a large manufacturing village. It contains one Presbyterian, one Methodist, and one Lutheran church; eight mercantile stores, three hundred dwellings, and seventeen hundred inhabitants."—*Barber's Hist. Col.*

was preaching, ceased to burn. This circumstance would probably have a tendency to fix the text in the mind of the hearer. At Hudson, the last Sabbath, I preached three times; and if flowing tears, with occasional smiles, and sorrowful looks, and at the end of every petition a hearty "Amen," might be considered as so many proofs of the sincerity of a people's love to their minister, sure I am that my hearers were not wanting in that "fruit of the Spirit." But many of them had, more than once or twice, given such substantial proofs of their unfeigned regard, that I was not even tempted to think that I was not acceptable to the people of my charge all the time I was in Hudson—from May, 1822, to June, 1824. In fact the circumstance of my being stationed there a second time—in 1848–1850—and the kind reception which I met with among all parties, confirmed me in the belief, that our people in general, with very few exceptions, are satisfied with the economy of Methodism, and prefer the system of itinerancy to every other now in operation.

In the course of this year, the *fifth* of my itinerancy, I traveled two thousand four hundred and seventy miles, preached two hundred and thirty-eight sermons, married eight couples, baptized two by immersion, two by sprinkling, and sixteen infants, one of whom I married to the man of her choice after an interval of twenty-six years. At the close of the second year my family consisted of five persons—including myself and wife, two children, and a hired girl. I kept a horse and traveling apparatus for winter and summer, and received of the stewards for support the exact sum of two hundred dollars,—and, notwithstanding my doctor's bill was more than twenty dollars, I left the place free of debt.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RHINEBECK CIRCUIT—FIRST YEAR.

THE General Conference of 1824 was held in the city of Baltimore, in the month of May. The British Conference had appointed the Rev. Richard Reece as a delegate, and the Rev. John Hannah as his traveling companion, to visit this country. They arrived in New-York on the 10th of March,—and by them I received from my old class-leader, Mr. John Hackett, of Derby, three bound volumes of the English Methodist Magazine; a diamond Dictionary of the Bible, from Mr. William Jones, one of my band-mates; and a letter from the Rev. Edward Oakes, all of which were "as cold water to a thirsty soul." Our annual conference, this year, commenced its session on the first of June. We met in the chapel of the Wesleyan seminary, 14 Crosby-street; this was before the Book Concern was located in that spot. The conference was well attended. Peace, harmony, and brotherly-

love prevailed among the preachers. Not one instance of death had occurred among them in the course of the year. None were expelled, none withdrew; but one was located. Eight were received on trial, two of whom have since died, the names of four others have disappeared from the Minutes, and only two of them are now found in the traveling ranks. While the conference was in session, a new church in York-street, Brooklyn, was dedicated to the service of Almighty God. It was the second Methodist Episcopal church in that city. A much larger one now occupies the place where it stood. The old Sands-street church was then standing. That also has been removed, and a larger one erected in its place; but the second one was destroyed by fire, and a third now stands where the two former once stood. In addition to these, a large and elegant one in Washington-street, and another in Pacific-street, and six or seven smaller ones in different parts of that city have been built within a few years.

On the evening of the second day of the

conference, the Female Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held its fifth anniversary in the John-street church, New-York. Three excellent and stirring addresses were delivered on the occasion,—the first by the Rev. Mr. Reece, the English delegate, the second by Mr. (now Dr.) Hannah, and the third by the eloquent and lamented Summerfield. After Mr. Summerfield had finished his address, a liberal contribution was made for the furtherance of the objects of the society.

At the close of the conference the preachers received their appointments, as in the order of God, and went to their work, apparently in the spirit of cheerful submission, and determined resolution to labor, to suffer, or to die, in the cause of God. Our friends in the city entertained us with their wonted hospitality and kindness, for which, if they have not already received their reward, may they be recompensed at the resurrection of the just!

During the intervals of business in conference, and on the Sabbath, I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Reece and Mr. Han-

nah frequently, and of hearing them preach several times while in the city. Mr. Reece was particularly pleased with the singing in the John-street church. In one of his letters, published in the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine for 1825, he thus speaks of it: "It is customary in the city of New-York, and elsewhere, immediately after the sermon, while the stewards are making the usual collection, for the choir to sing a few verses. The last time I preached in that city I was much charmed and affected. My subject had been the glorious privilege of true believers, to have Christ living in them by his Spirit. A spirit of prayer was poured upon the congregation; and a special influence of God accompanied the word of his grace, and much affected us all. At this moment the singers, joined by most of the people in sounds as much resembling the melody of heaven as I expect to hear on earth, began:—

'O joyful sound of gospel grace,
Christ shall in me appear;
I, even I, shall see his face,
I shall be holy here.'

The impression made I shall never forget. The words were so well chosen, so aptly tuned, so accordant with the feelings of the congregation; the voices, male and female, were so melodious, and so impassioned, and tune so soft and devotional, [Pleyel's C. M. D.,] that the blessing of perfect love seemed to be within the reach, or rather in the possession, of every worshiper. Seasons like these ought to be recorded; they are to me times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. If our singers were everywhere pious, and had the judgment to adapt the words to the subject, and to the state of feeling in the congregation, such a custom would greatly heighten the effect produced by the sermon."

Immediately after conference I returned to Hudson, to meet the Rev. Timothy Benedict, my successor in that place, and to send my household furniture, in the best way I could, to Rhinebeck. Brother Benedict, in coming from Hillsdale to Hudson, met with an accident, which but for the good providence of God might have been a very serious one. He was traveling in a one-horse wagon,

with his wife and three children, his wife's sister, and the usual quantity of light movables, when suddenly the wagon was upset, and threw them on the ground. Through mercy, no lives were lost nor bones broken.

On Sunday, June 20th, 1824, I preached three times in the beautiful "Mission Chapel" at Rhinebeck. The introduction of Methodism into this place, by the ministry of the late Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, being now matter of history, I need not dwell upon that fact. Every Methodist almost, far and near, in Europe and in America, is familiar with the name of the venerable patriarch—the cotemporary of Asbury and Lee, the friend of Wesley and Coke, and one of the pioneers of Methodism in Nova Scotia, Vermont, New-York, and the western part of Connecticut. I cannot say that I was wholly unembarrassed the first time I occupied the pulpit in my new appointment. But I will not detain the reader with a description of my feelings on that day; suffice it to say, my reception was cordial and kind, not only in that place, but in every other throughout the circuit. On the Wed-

nesday following I attended my first appointment in the country part of my charge. This was at Jacob Armstrong's, in the town of Clinton. Here also I met with a very kind reception. My host was a widower, and his daughters kept house for him. To these, with the rest of the family, and a few neighbors, I preached repentance and remission of sins, through faith in the name of Christ. The next day Mr. Armstrong and one of his daughters accompanied me to the next appointment, where, at two o'clock, I preached from "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and do it." I then proceeded to the next preaching place, namely, Isaac Lyon's. Father and mother Lyon were then both living, as were also their son Thomas, and their daughter Mary; and Martin, and Thomas, and Hiram Wing, and Bethia Martin, and James Briggs and his wife, and some others of that class, who have since then gone the way of all the earth. Of Isaac Lyon's family, which then consisted of himself and wife, six daughters, two sons, a niece, and a little boy, I think I may say that simplicity and godly sin-

cerity, economy and liberality, modest worth and unaffected piety, were among the more prominent features that, from first to last, attracted my attention. The members of the class seemed generally to partake of the same blessed spirit that reigned in this lovely family, and indeed the whole neighborhood appeared to enjoy a degree of settled tranquillity not usually met with in a world

"Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way."

My first appointment in this place was on a Thursday afternoon, at four o'clock, in the pleasant month of June, when the days are long, the mornings cool, and the evenings calm and clear. At such a time, if the conscience is pure and free from stain, and the mind enjoys a respite from temptation; if the storms of outward affliction have subsided, and the summer of friendship opens upon our path, and the ever-blessed Sun of righteousness shines without a cloud, for the wayfaring man to tarry only for a night in such a place, is little less than heaven begun upon earth. After preaching and

taking tea with the family that afternoon, I took a walk in a pleasant grove near the house, and there felt, perhaps, as much as I ever did, like Peter on the mount, when he said, "Master, it is good for us to be here." But "time and tide stop for no man," and I must hasten on to my next appointment. This was at

THE SLATE QUARRY.

I have written and published a sketch of this place before; but as the paper in which that article appeared, may not have fallen in the way of those juvenile readers into whose hands this little book may come, I will transcribe a part of it for their special benefit.

The *quarry* was in the center of a ridge of hills running north and south, somewhere in Dutchess county; but whether in the town of Milan, Clinton, or Rhinebeck, I cannot say. It was about four or five miles east of the village of Rhinebeck. This ridge of rocks had been explored some years before I saw it, and was found to contain a considerable vein of that valuable

material which, when wrought into suitable shape as to length, breadth, and thickness, answers well the purpose of tiles or shingles for covering the roofs of dwelling-houses and other buildings, affording, in many cases, a safeguard from fire, and a shelter from the rain. The quarry had been worked to good advantage for several years by a number of Welsh families, who had left the narrow limits of the Principality for the more extensive regions of the States. Coming from a country where slate-rocks abound, and where families seldom change their residence or modes of life, possibly these emigrants knew no other calling by which to gain their daily bread than to work in the quarries. Among these laboring poor, while they were searching for earthly treasure in the bowels of the earth, some of my predecessors in the ministry had opened the heavenly treasures of the gospel mine. Perhaps it might be said of some of their hearers, that "the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it;" but of others, it might be affirmed with

equal truth, that "they received the word with all readiness," and for a time "the number of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."

The mutations of trade and commerce, however, to which all countries are liable, even in the most prosperous times, had so affected these honest poor, as to deprive them of that profit to which they were justly entitled for the labor of their hands; in consequence of which several had left their employment at the quarry, in order to turn their attention to some more profitable pursuit; and the few families that remained, according to appearance, were in the depth of poverty, and, in a certain sense, "perplexed on every side, yet not in despair; cast down, but not destroyed." Among these I soon found a worthy family, of the name of Johnson—(the name, and some circumstances, immediately reminded me of "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain)—who were ready to "receive a disciple in the name of a disciple;" and, according to their ability, to extend to him their hospitalities with a cheerfulness and readiness wor-

thy of the sacred cause in which I was engaged.

The good man of the house was working in the quarry; but his neat little wife met me at the door of their humble cottage with a smile, and gave me a hearty welcome to their peaceful dwelling. She showed me the stable, which was a very low-built shed, made up of slate stones, and covered with the same material. It was scarcely large enough to contain two horses, but answered very well for the cow and the pigs by night, and the preacher's horse by day. My host had not laid in his store of hay for winter, but I had plenty of provender with me, and that was sufficient for that time. Matters being thus arranged, I entered the lowly cottage: it consisted of three apartments, which, for distinction's sake, I denominated the dining-room, the bed-room, and the kitchen. The dining-hall, which was the preaching-room too, had an open fire-place, in which stood a green oak bough, and a pair of venerable andirons. The hearth-stone was not of Italian marble, it was of no foreign market,

but the product of the adjacent quarry. The floor was of pine-boards, but not covered with yellow paint nor costly carpeting: it was kept clean by the industry of my hostess. The walls were not adorned with splendid portraits nor fine paintings. Four small pictures, done by the hand of some ingenious nymph or swain, and one agricultural engraving, were all the decorations that I observed in that apartment. The library consisted of two volumes only—a Bible and a hymn-book. One window, with the exception of the opening doors, was the only medium of light for this room; and in case of accident, when one of the transparent squares was demolished, its place was supplied with an opaque one from the quarry.

The son of my presiding elder, Mr. Robert Stead, was with me; and at twelve o'clock we sat down with the family to a frugal meal, dressed in a plain, wholesome, Christian manner. We had been taught in early life to ask a blessing on the food prepared before we sat down to eat, and to return thanks after partaking of the bounties of

Providence. After dinner, a few of the neighbors came in, to whom I endeavored to explain and apply the words of St. Paul to Timothy: "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." There was a small class, which I met after preaching, and exhorted them to "keep themselves in the love of God," and then left them for a season.

As I came to this place again, in the regular course of my itinerancy, I took an opportunity, on one occasion, to view the quarry while the men were at work in it. The sun beat down with fervid ray, and was reflected by the smooth sides of the cave with such intensity, that it made me feel very faint. I was thirsty;—the men showed me a cooling spring:—I drank, and was refreshed, then went and preached to the little flock, from Prov. xxv, 25: "As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." On my return home from the quarry, my mind was led into a train of devout meditations and profitable reflections. In the natural world, it was

harvest time; in moral and spiritual things, with respect to myself and my concerns at the quarry, it was seed-time. Ere long, perhaps, I thought, I may reap the reward of my labors, in the conversion of one soul at least; or another fellow-laborer, coming after me, may, in this sense, be preferred before me; and then he that soweth and he that reapeth will rejoice together.

On the 27th of June I preached for the first time in the old meeting-house, at Milan, near John I. Row's. This was one of the first preaching places in Dutchess county. The old meeting-house in which I preached has since then been taken down, and a new one erected in its place. In the afternoon of the same day that I preached at Row's meeting-house I filled an appointment at Pine Plains, in brother Walter Mead's workshop. Since then a Methodist church has been erected in that place. At that time Pine Plains belonged to the Rhinebeck circuit; now it is a station by itself. While in that region I became acquainted with a family named Keeler. The grandfather was then living, and was a happy, shouting Method-

ist. His son, Denton, who is now in the traveling connection, then lived with his parents. I once preached at their house, and baptized a little boy named Richard, the son of Denton; he also is now a traveling preacher, a member of the New-York Conference. At Mount Ross I met with a very kind family, named Northrup, and preached occasionally at their house. Most of them were delightful singers; and the time spent under their hospitable roof was to me exceedingly pleasant. At another appointment, in the town of Milan, I found a very comfortable home at Peter Shooks'; the place, I believe, is now called Shooksville. A Methodist church has been built there; and it is now a regular Sabbath appointment on the West-Taghkanic circuit. The first time I preached at brother Shooks', a young man came to me an hour or two before preaching-time, and wished me to preach from two texts which he seemed to think contradicted each other. The first was,—"Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him." The other was: "Answer a fool according to his folly,

lest he be wise in his own conceit." Prov. xxvi, 4, 5. The design of the young man, as I afterward learned, was to puzzle and embarrass me. Not knowing his object, and supposing him to be sincere, I set myself to find out the different kinds of fools mentioned in the Bible; and then tried to show that the best way to answer some of them was, not according to their folly, and others in a different manner. Beautiful examples of the different ways of silencing folly may be found in the answers of Christ to his adversaries: Matt. xvi, 1–4; xxi, 23–27; xxii, 45, 46; Luke xiii, 11–17; and also in the answers of Manoah's wife, Judges xiii, 23; of Abigail, 1 Samuel xxv, 32, 33; of Naaman's servants, 2 Kings v, 13, 14; of Paul, Acts xvi, 28; of Job, ii, 9, 10; and of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii, 36. It is not to be wondered at that the passage in Proverbs xxvi, 4, 5, puzzled the young man, and that he thought to attempt to explain it would embarrass the preacher, for "the learned Dr. Kennicott was so strangely stumbled by this verbal contradiction, as to propose a rash emendation of the text from

the Syriac and Targum, which wholly misses the point." See Bridges on the text. At another time I preached, with some degree of liberty, on the different sacrifices of Cain and Abel, from Heb. xi, 4. After sermon a Quaker came to me and said: "*Thee* has the truth, I believe; but the thing is to make others believe it."

In the month of August this year [1824] I accompanied father Garrettson to a camp-meeting, near Newburgh. As we entered the grove the singing sounded melodiously; the prayers of God's people seemed to be fervent and full of devotion; and the countenances of some old friends appeared cheerfully brightened by reason of the heavenly exercises in which they were engaged. The preachers who met on that occasion were: F. Garrettson, D. Ostrander, S. Arnold, J. Youngs, J. D. Moriarty, N. Bigelow, J. Hunt, who are all dead; and N. White, W. Jewett, D. Devinne, F. W. Smith, D. Lewis, J. Kennaday, G. Lyon, B. Sellick, C. Silliman, and some others, who still live. The preaching was in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. One woman was so power-

fully wrought upon by the sin-convincing Spirit, that she appeared as helpless as one dead, from early candle-light until next forenoon about ten o'clock. She then recovered her strength, and rejoiced in the God of her salvation.

At the time of our first quarterly collection at Rhinebeck, Providence so ordered it that we were favored with pleasant weather and large congregations throughout the day. Some rich visitors were present, whose liberal contributions augmented the collection. I could not but admire the goodness of God in this particular. I had come to the station destitute of funds—had gone in debt a little—had borrowed money of my *new friends* to "rub off old scores," and felt somewhat cast down in mind about it; but, after contriving various ways to get along without disgracing my profession, my fears and difficulties were made to vanish, and by Monday morning I could look my creditors in the face without dismay. All glory be to God, and thanks to the almoners of his bounty. Our friends in this country differ considerably in their financial operations

from their brethren in England. At the last quarterly meeting that I attended at Derby, there was a deficiency in the class-collections to the amount of eighty dollars. What was to be done? Were the preachers to go unpaid? Not so; one of the stewards, a "successful merchant," put down the money there and then. If that were the case here, our presiding elders would not have to talk so much about money matters after a good sermon on Sabbath, as they have to do sometimes.

Our quarterly meeting for the circuit was held at Clinton, in brother Isaac Lyon's barn, September 11, 12. We had one sermon on Saturday, and two on Sabbath. The love-feast was well attended; and the people spoke freely of the love of God to their souls, and of their love to Him and his cause. The next day, I and my presiding elder (Rev. H. Stead) started for a camp-meeting in Connecticut. We traveled in an easterly direction, through part of York State, into the borders of New-England. The sun shone brightly, the weather was comfortably warm, and the roads good,

though somewhat hilly,—the scenery was beautiful. On the left hand was Mount Washington, whose summit was enveloped in a cloud; to the right lay pleasant vales, and well-cultivated farms. In the town of Salisbury were extensive iron works, and at the foot of the mountain beds of ore in abundance. We called at father Everett's, where I saw the whitest bread my eyes ever beheld. After taking a little refreshment, we journeyed onward to the east. On the right and left were towering mountains, lofty hills, and pleasant dales; here and there a winding stream, and now and then a silvery lake, to arrest the attention of the Christian philosopher,—all setting forth the mighty power, the wondrous skill, and the great goodness of the Most High! In the town of Salisbury there was a Baptist, a Methodist, a Congregational, and an Episcopal church; and some good dwelling-houses, stores, and other buildings, which exhibited so many varied specimens of the industry and enterprising genius of man. We called on father Fenn, "an old disciple," eighty-four years of age, and then proceed-

ed on our journey until sundown, when we arrived at father Benedict's, in the town of Canaan, which was within half a mile of the camp-ground. The next morning we were on the spot, in company with about twenty-four preachers, twelve of whom, in the course of the meeting, sounded the gospel trumpet "with an inviting voice." The names of the preachers, and characteristic notices of them, may be seen in the Rev. Elbert Osborn's Autobiography, pp. 103, 104. Throughout the encampment we were favored with the most delightful weather, with the exception of the last night, when it rained a little. The soldiers of Immanuel put on the heavenly armor, and with united force made war upon the camp of the enemy. The word, both in preaching and in exhortation, was attended with power; the prayers of God's people were heard and answered; and, as near as I could ascertain, about twenty-four of the slaves of sin and Satan were brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. The best of order prevailed, except in one instance, when a wicked son of Belial, who

was probably intoxicated, threw a club at one of the preachers, which struck him in the face, and cut and bruised him severely, —the marks of which he bears to this day. On our return from the camp-meeting we called again at father Everett's, where we met with some friends who were quite in the spirit of the meeting. We sang and prayed together, and then parted in the bonds of Christian fellowship, to see each other again, perhaps, no more, till we meet in the Canaan above.

Shortly after the camp-meeting—being then in the town of Stamford, Dutchess county, New-York—I called to see Doctor Richard Bartlett, a very aged man, then on his death-bed. He was a native of Boston, Mass.; and descended from English parents, who were members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, or "Church of England," as it is sometimes called. They had taught their son the fear of the Lord; but there was no evidence of his having experienced a change of heart until after he became acquainted with the ministry of the Methodists. The circumstances which led

to that event were related to me by sister Bartlett, after her husband's decease. I was invited to preach at her house; and after the meeting was dismissed she told me that I had had the honor of standing in the very place where, in former days, bishops Asbury and Whatcoat, and father Garrettson, and Benjamin Abbott, had stood. I was anxious to hear more on that subject, and she related the matter as follows:—

"When I was a young woman, or soon after I was married, as I was walking along the road one day, a gentleman on horseback overtook me, and asked me if we had any Methodists in our neighborhood. It was the first time I heard the name of Methodist, and I knew not what it meant. He then told me that he was a Methodist preacher; and asked me if I thought he could obtain a place for preaching. I told him I would consult my husband; that he might call another day, and I would give him an answer. It was father Garrettson; he called the next day; my husband consented to open his doors for the preaching of the word; a regular appointment was

made, a class was formed, my husband and I joined it; and it was not long before we had a regular quarterly meeting at our house." This was probably the first class formed in those parts; and to me it was gratifying to learn that some of them remained steadfast in the faith until the end of their earthly career. In his last sickness the doctor evinced an unshaken confidence in the merits and mercy of the Redeemer; and, after suffering various infirmities and afflictions, fell asleep in Jesus in the eighty-seventh year of his age.

The venerable Robert Sands, Esq.,—or, as he was familiarly called by the Methodists, "father Sands,"—was another of these aged members of the Church who died while I lived at Rhinebeck. In the early days of Methodism he boldly came forward and received the heralds of the cross. At his house they always found a most cordial welcome. He gladly embraced the doctrines they taught; and in a short time gave satisfactory evidence that his heart was renewed by the power of divine grace. He lived to see the cause which he had

espoused established in Rhinebeck; and after witnessing the triumphs of redeeming grace and dying love in the conversion of his dearest relatives, and the triumphant deaths of several members of his family, he was called to taste the bitter cup of affliction in his own person: but after suffering awhile, in a most Christian spirit, he was released by death, and in the eighty-second year of his age entered the joy of his Lord.

Mrs. Elizabeth James—the mother of Maria, author of a poem entitled "Wales," and other poetical effusions—died also about that time. She was a native of North Wales; and when about fourteen years of age—under the labors of Mr. Jones, an eminent preacher of Mr. Whitefield's order—experienced religion, and became a member of the Church. She was married to Mr. John James in 1794, and in 1800 emigrated with him to this country. In 1807, Mr. James and his family took up their abode at the Slate Quarry. At that time she was the only professor of religion in the neighborhood. Several young men,

her countrymen, working at the quarry, boarded at her house; and, though her husband was not then converted, she read the Bible, and led the devotions of the family in her native tongue, with a zeal and success seldom witnessed. It was not long before her husband, and several of the workmen, and others, became the subjects of a work of grace, and were formed into a class, —from which time the Slate Quarry became a regular preaching-place on the Rhinebeck circuit. Throughout her whole life mother James strove to promote the glory of God; and it so happened that the services at her funeral were performed by Bishop Hedding, father Garrettson, father Matthias, and another of the elders of the Church,—thus verifying the word of the Lord: "Them that honor me, I will honor."

CHAPTER XIX.

RHINEBECK CIRCUIT—SECOND YEAR.

HAVING, in the former part of this work, occupied more pages in descriptions and reflections than I at first intended, and having but little space left, I will now, for the sake of variety, give the reader a few extracts from my journal:—

April 25–31, 1825. My family having gone to Salem, there to remain until after conference, I spent the greater part of the week at father Garrettson's, in company with Bishop Hedding, the pious man of God, the familiar friend, the sociable companion, the humble disciple of Jesus. To be with such a family, and in such company, at such a time and place, was to me a rich treat.

May 1, I preached the funeral sermon of Mrs. Elizabeth James, from 2 Tim. iv, 7, 8. Peace to her memory! *May* 2, I traveled from Rhinebeck to Greenbush; 3, from Greenbush to Troy, in order to attend the conference. On Sabbath, during

conference, I spent the day with Rev. H. Stead, D. Lewis, and N. Rice, at our old friend, Isaac Lawson's, and the Sabbath following at Rensselaerville, where I had labored in 1819 and 1820. The sight of former friends affected me much, and the sound of their sweet voices "opened all the springs of sensibility within me," and made me weep, not tears of grief, but joy. Like Paul, at Appii Forum, when I saw the brethren, I "thanked God, and took courage."

May 17, I returned to Hudson; 18, from Hudson to Amenia; 19, from Amenia to Salem; 26, from Salem to Rhinebeck.

July 8. During a ride of four hours, from Rhinebeck to Catskill, my mind was occupied in composing an elegy on the death of Summerfield, which was afterward published in the Methodist Magazine.

On my return from Catskill to Rhinebeck, I amused myself by reading "Thompson's Castle of Indolence." The exercise kept me from drowsiness; but the weather being warm, and slackening my rein a little, my horse got into the poet's castle, and "stood stock still."

July 13. I preached, by request, at Mrs. Montgomery's, to a very genteel company of her relatives and friends. Had I possessed the powers of a Summerfield, or a Whitefield, I might have been instrumental of leading some of my hearers to Christ. As it was, I directed their minds to the contemplation of the truths contained in the ninth and tenth verses of the ninth Psalm. Shortly after this I preached at another place, on human depravity; after which an elderly lady told me she thought I made the subject—"a little too dark," and next time I must "make it a little brighter."

August 7–9. I attended a camp-meeting at Haverstraw. It was one of the best meetings of the kind I ever witnessed. The late Rev. Thomas Burch preached from Isa. xxvi, 19, one of the best sermons on the resurrection of the dead I ever heard. And what made the meeting still more interesting to me was, that during one of the prayer meetings my wife's sister experienced religion.

December 31. I attended a watch-night

at Mount Ross, near Pine Plains. Brother Mink, a local preacher, commenced with singing and prayer, and then preached from 1 Cor. xvi, 13. When he had concluded, I followed with some remarks on, "Time is short." These remarks were afterward extended and embodied in one of our Tracts, No. 132. Brother Pilsbury, an exhorter, then addressed the meeting at some length, and after him father Keeler, in his usual style of artless and animated piety, spoke as follows: "I have been," said he, "a fiddler for Satan, and spent many a night in his cause. But now, my friends and dear people, though I cannot exhort and preach like these ministers, here I am; look at me! I am a witness for Jesus. O happy living! bless God! When I die, you may expect that I shall die shouting! Bless God for what I now feel!" Our meeting was at sister Northrop's, and the season was one of delightful refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Charles Northrop and his two sisters, Lois and Catharine, were some of the best singers in that part of the country. After meeting, we partook of a

cup of tea, which was provided and presented in an elegant and Christian manner. O the simplicity, the sincerity, the affection, the love, that prevails among genuine friends and humble Christians! Avaunt, ye scorners of the Christian name; in all your frantic routs, your bacchanalian revels, though your spirits may be high, and your countenances bright and cheerful, you know nothing of that transcendent joy and solid peace which fill the Christian's breast in an hour like this, when

> "Betwixt the mount and multitude
> Our day is spent in doing good,
> Our night in praise and prayer."

Jan. 2, 1826. I and my wife dined at father Garrettson's, in company with brother Freeborn Garrettson and his lady. More and more am I convinced of the sound evangelical piety, and Christian philanthropy of the different members of this excellent family. Seventy-three years of the life of father Garrettson and his good lady have rolled into eternity; and yet they both appear to be as vigorous

in body and mind as when I first saw them.

10th. After regulating matters at home, I hastened to the dwelling of my venerable friend. He was sick, and confined to his bed, but in the most heavenly frame of mind. His conversation was on the immaculate purity of the divine law; on the impossibility of being saved by that law, considering man as a fallen creature; on the superior excellence of the gospel dispensation, and on the infinite merits of Christ.*

26*th*. It fell to my lot to preach the dedication sermon at a new church in Pleasant Valley, seven miles from Poughkeepsie. That church has since been taken down, and a new one built in the center of the village, where the first ought to have been placed.

Under date of March 14th, I find the following remarks concerning preaching, viz.: In choosing texts, and subjects for public discourse, I always take into account—1st, my audience, whether courtly and re-

* Father Garrettson died about two years after this.

fined, or rustic and unpolished; 2d, their peculiar state of mind,—prejudices, prepossessions, antipathies, and attachments, as far as I can ascertain them; 3d, their religious state,—whether like the Church at Ephesus, Sardis, Philadelphia, or Laodicea; or whether there be any instances of awakening or not; 4th, their age and temporal circumstances; 5th, the season of the year, the festivals of the Church, &c.; 6th, what class of hearers preponderates—the righteous or the wicked. Knowing my weakness, and want of some peculiar gifts, I endeavor to let the word of God speak for itself; and as a skillful husbandman would not plant corn in every soil and season—but wheat in one place, and rye in another, and corn only in particular places and seasons—so, by the grace of God, I would preach one kind of truth at one time and place, and another at another, remembering also that God alone can give the increase.

April 1*st.* My time to-day was mostly taken up with working in the garden, cutting wood, and making and receiving

visits,—so that I had but little time to prepare for the labors of the Sabbath. During the day, ten or twelve passages of Scripture presented themselves to my mind; but I knew not which to choose. I tried to bring my thoughts to dwell on two in particular,—one for the morning, and the other for the evening; but though, like a delicate flower, one of them seemed to open while the orb of day shone bright and clear, by the time the sun went down it closed up again. I then abandoned the project, and retired to rest. In the morning I collected my thoughts again; and at last, after much mental toil, fixed on a subject for the morning, founded on Matthew xxvi, 41: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."

Monday, 3*d*. This day I received in part the reward of my Saturday's toil and Sunday's labor. From the elder Mrs. Garrettson, and two other ladies, I received testimonials of approbation, and expressions of peculiar satisfaction, in relation to the choice of texts and subjects. It is very gratifying to learn from our wise and judicious friends

that our discourses are appropriate and well-timed; it is next to the approbation of our heavenly Father, and the testimony of a good conscience. It forms a pleasing contrast to the buffetings of Satan, and operates as a cordial to the fainting spirit.

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Full fifty years the cross he bore,
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In perils oft, in days of yore,—
Nor counted dear his valued life,
So he might gain the heavenly prize—
A crown of glory in the skies!

At home, abroad, by night and day,—
'In labors more abundant,' too,—
He did not fear what man could say,
But gave to all their righteous due,
While he proclaim'd the living word,
The counsel of his faithful Lord.

Sound in the doctrines of the cross,—
A friend to truth in error's night,—
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